William Dawson.

TWO TREATISES.

The First, Concerning

Reproaching & Censure:

The Second, An

ANSWER to Mr SERJEANT's *Sure-footing.*

To which are annexed

THREE SERMONS

Preached upon several Occasions, and very useful for these Times.

By the late Learned and Reverend

WILLIAM FALKNER, D.D.

LONDON,

Printed for Richard Chiswell, at the *Rose* and *Crown* in S. *Paul's* Church-Yard, and sold by *William Oliver*, in *Norwich*. MDCLXXXIV.

THIRTEEN SERMONS

useful for these Times.

WILLIAM FULKNER, D.D.

Printed for Richard Chiswell, at the Rose and Crown in S. Paul's Church-Yard, and sold by Walter Kettilby, at the Bishop's Head in St. Paul's Church-Yard. MDCLXXXIV.

TO THE

Most Reverend FATHER in GOD,

WILLIAM

By DIVINE PROVIDENCE

LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY,

HIS GRACE,

Primate of all ENGLAND and Metropolitan; and one of the Lords of His Majestie's Most Honourable Privy Council.

May it please Your GRACE,

I *Humbly present to your Grace's Patronage, some* Remains *of an excellent Person, for whom Your Grace was pleased to express a great value while he lived, and whom You are still pleased, upon all occasions, to mention with great kindness. Had he lived to have published any of these Discourses himself, he would have chosen no other Patron; and had he lived a little longer, he would have found, that he had needed no other. For since some may wonder, that so great a Man should go off*

the Stage with no greater Character, than one of the Town-Preachers at Lyn Regis; *it is fit the World should know, that Your Grace, who is the peculiar Patron of modest and neglected Worth, designed better things for him.*

That great honour I have for Dr. Falkner's *Memory, to whose wise instructions I owe that little Knowledge I have attained to, would easily have perswaded me to have given the World a more particular account of his Life, which was adorned with as many eminent Vertues, as I believe this last Age can shew in any one man. But though distance of place could not interrupt our Correspondence nor our Friendship, yet it has for many years deprived me of the familiarities and intimacies of his conversation, which give the truest Character of any man; and I dare not undertake a work, wherein I can neither serve my Friend, nor satisfie the World.*

As for these posthumous Treatises, he designed only the first of them for the Press, which concerns Reproaching and Censures; *which he observed, was grown so common a fault, that it is generally thought to be none: and therefore in the first Part, he shews the great Evil and Sinfulness of it, and how irreconcileable it is with a true Christian Spirit. But then he considered, that as men, who are most guilty of this vice, have no sense of it themselves; so they are very apt to charge those with it, who are not guilty. Whoever has had the courage and honesty to reprove the Schisms and Factions, that are among us, and to censure the errors and miscarriages of the several Sects and Parties of Christians, have been branded with the ignominious name of* Railers, *and* Revilers, *and* Accusers

sers of the Brethren; *and therefore in his Second Part, he shews, that such just and sober Censures as these, which are designed to convince men of their errors and mistakes, are so far from being a fault, that they are a necessary duty. And because some men are transported with such an intemperate zeal, that they do not impartially consider, what is truly blame-worthy in those, who differ from them, but censure and condemn, at all adventures, whatever is said or done by men of such a Party or Character; He proposed to himself, particularly to consider the several Sects and Professions of Christians, and what it is, which deserves reproof and Censure in them: which he has done with great Candour and Judgement, but did not live to perfect it. For we have no reason to doubt, but the* Presbyterians *should have had their share too, as well as the other Sects amongst us, but either that Part was not done, or it was lost, for no Remains could be found of it.*

As for his Answer to Mr. Serjeant's Sure-Footing, *that was written many years since, and designed by him for the Press; but by that time he had finished it, he found that work done to his hand by a very excellent Pen, which put an end to that Controversie, and therefore he laid it by without any intention to make it publick. But since his Death, some of his Friends have had other thoughts of it, and indeed, it is so useful a Discourse, that though there is no need of a new Answer to* Serjeant, *since the Publication of Dr.* Tillotson's Rule of Faith, *yet I believe it will not be unacceptable to Learned men.*

He penn'd very few Sermons in long hand, which, I suppose, is the reason, why there are no more published.

These

These that are, besides the usefulness of the several Subjects, may serve as a specimen of his plain and pious way of instructing the people.

My Lord, I should be very ungrateful, should I neglect this opportunity to make my publick acknowledgements to Your Grace for those extraordinary favours I have so lately received from You; on which the ease and comfort of my life does so much depend, that I am for ever bound to implore the Divine Majesty to bless Your Grace with all happiness and prosperity in this life, and with the rewards of an exemplary Piety and Vertue in the next, which is the hearty Prayer of,

My Lord,

Your Grace's most

dutiful Servant,

William Sherlock.

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OF REPROACHING AND CENSURE.

The First Part:

Concerning the irregular Excesses, *and great* Sinfulness, *of uncharitable evil-speaking; especially of Superiours.*

CHAP. I.

Some preparatory considerations, concerning the evil of Reproaching.

1. RElegion hath that general influence upon the life of the pious man, that it commands and governs his *thoughts* and *affections*, his *words* and *actions*. But where the true rules of piety are neglected, very many indulge themselves, in great disorder and miscarriages, in every one of these particulars.

Among other things, a strange licentious liberty is taken, by no small number of men, in *speaking injuriously*, and casting reproaches and unreasonable *censures* upon others, contrary to the rules of our Christian profession; yea, even upon men of the best principles, and the best lives, and not sparing our *Rulers* and *Governours*, in Church and State.

Evil speaking a vice dangerously prevailing at this time.

2. And this evil temper hath so far insinuated it self, and is become so spreading, and so open and manifest; that I account it one of the *prevailing vices* of our dayes. And when men are ashamed to own many other sinful practices, or to shew any approbation of them; as of drunkenness, swearing, uncleanness, oppression and such like; *uncharitable speeches* of others, are entertained with a secret delight and pleasure, and oft with open expressions of satisfaction. And this shews the great defilement of this sin, which not only prevails on the passions and *affections*, by corrupting and disordering them; but it also debaucheth, and perverteth the very inward principles of *Conscience* it self. I wish that with respect to very many persons, we had not now just cause, to take up the complaint of (*a*) Gr. *Nazianzen*, concerning the time he lived in, That that man *was best esteemed of*, not he who being governed *by the fear of God, durst not speak an idle word*, but *he who speaketh the most contumeliously against others, either openly or by sly intimations.*

(*a*) Naz. Or. 1. Οὕτω δεῖ σῷ ἐν ἡμῖν· ὃς πλεῖστα τὸν πλησίον ἔπτων κακῶς, ἢ διαβρήδην, ἢ δι' αἰνιγμάτων. *and it ought to be reproved, and checked.*

3. And therefore I shall now design to speak somewhat, which may manifest the *great evil* of this uncharitable behaviour, especially towards our Superiours, and may be sufficient to warn men against it. Such an undertaking as this, is very agreeable to that particular *Apostolical direction*, and precept of S. *Paul*; who charged *Titus* in the work of his Ministry, *Tit.* 3. 1, 2. to *put men in mind to be subject to Principalities and Powers, to obey Magistrates, to be ready to every good work. To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness to all men.* Whatsoever esteem some persons will have, of such instructions and truths as these are; the Apostle with respect hereto commands *Titus*, v. 8. *these things I will that thou affirm constantly*; and

and further declares in the end of that verſe, *theſe things are good and profitable unto men.* And it muſt needs be a fit ſeaſon, and very requiſite, to declare againſt any ſin, when it is grown to that height, that men will openly avow it, and become bold and confident in the practice of it, without ſhame or regret. And that what I ſhall ſpeak of this Subject may be the more carefully regarded, I ſhall in my entrance upon it take ſome notice (which I ſhall afterward, further purſue) of the great *hurt and danger* of this ſin, and its being inconſiſtent with piety, and true holineſs and Religion. The tongue, S. *James* ſaith, is *an unruly evil, full of deadly poyſon*, Jam. 3. 8. and therefore it is no little miſchief which proceeds from the ill government thereof.

Some preparatory conſiderations propoſed.

4. Uncharitable reproaches are, *Firſt*, Unſuitable to the beſt and *higheſt examples*, which the Scripture propoſeth for our imitation; and contrary and hateful to the wiſeſt and moſt excellent perſons. But it is moſt reaſonable for us to follow ſuch examples, ſince ſuch perſons who are of cleareſt knowledge, and free from all paſſionate and ſinful inclinations, can moſt perfectly diſcern good, and are fitly qualified to make the beſt choice. But this diſorder is ſo far oppoſite to true goodneſs, that though raſh men may not duly obſerve the evil thereof, yet as an evident conviction of the great ſinfulneſs contained therein, eſpecially in reproaching Governours, S. *Jude* tells us that *Michael the Archangel when contending with the Devil, durſt not bring againſt him a railing accuſation*, Jude 9. And yet inconſiderate and paſſionate *men* dare venture on this ſin without fear, though a perſon of ſo great wiſdom and knowledge as the *Archangel*, durſt not do it, and though the Apoſtle and the Holy Ghoſt himſelf, propoſe his example, as a manifeſt *condemnation* of ſuch tranſgreſſors. And thoſe pious Chriſtians who have been beſt acquainted with the Spirit of Chriſtianity, have accounted (as every man ought to do) this inſtance to be of great force. Hence (*b*) S. *Hierome* from this inſtance of the Archangel, urgeth the neceſſity

1. *Reproaching is contrary to the higheſt and beſt examples, ſet before us in the Scripture.*

(*b*) Hieron. in Tit. c. 3.

of a careful practice of that Chriſtian duty, to *ſpeak evil of no man*. And when S. *Peter* had obſerved, what a daring preſumption ſome evil men were arrived unto, that they were not afraid to *ſpeak evil of Dignities*, he in like manner adds, 2 *Pet.* 2. 10, 11. *whereas Angels which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accuſations againſt them before the Lord:* and we ſhould do the will of God on Earth, as it is done by them in Heaven. Agreeably to theſe we have the great example of our Lord and Saviour, which is propoſed for our imitation, 1 *Pet.* 2. 23. Who *when he was reviled, he reviled not again*. And beſides theſe things, we may diſcern how much the holy God diſliketh, and is diſpleaſed with this evil practice, by his *laws* and precepts condemning it, and by the *threatnings* he hath denounced, and the *puniſhments* he will inflict upon thoſe who are guilty of this ſin; but of theſe I ſhall diſcourſe more hereafter.

5. But this evil practice is very agreeable to the temper and diſpoſition of the *evil ſpirit:* and thereupon (*c*) ancient Writers have accounted the name of διάβολος *a calumniator*, to have been very properly given to him. For *pride*, *uncharitableneſs*, promoting miſchief, and departing from truth, all which things are manifeſtly joyned together in this ſin, do make up very much of the nature of the evil one. Theſe things therefore are both pleaſing to him, and a conſiderable reſemblance of him. And indeed the Devil hath done a great part of *his work* in the world, by this very practice; and it becomes every Chriſtian, to deteſt the following his example, and the carrying on his work. The firſt tranſgreſſion of mankind, was occaſioned, by his *miſreporting*, and miſrepreſenting the intentions of Gods Government, and his laws. And one of the moſt effectual means, whereby Satan hath hindred the greater progreſs of the Chriſtian Religion, eſpecially in the Primitive times, when Religion it ſelf continued uncorrupt; was by *defaming* both our holy Religion, and them who heartily embraced it, and by prevailing upon a great part of the world to *believe much evil* concerning it, and entertain great prejudi-

(*c*) Baſil. Ep. 75. Chryſ. Hom. de Diabol. Tentat. Andr. Cæſar. in Apoc. c. 34. *and is a great complyance with the Evil one.*

ces.

ces againſt it. To this end ſuch calumnies were invented, and ſpread abroad, as that the aſſembling of Chriſtians together to partake of the holy *Euchariſt*, were meetings to perpetrate villanies, in *murdering* and eating of an Infant, and practiſing *uncleanneſs*, as many of the Writers of the firſt Ages have declared, who have refuted ſuch notorious ſlanders. And the Chriſtians themſelves were aſperſed as men of *inflexible obſtinacy*, and a perverſe will: and this even (*d*) *Pliny* chargeth them with, who vindicates them from the forementioned crimes. They were alſo reputed *Atheiſts*, as (*e*) *Juſtin Martyr* declares, becauſe they owned not the *Gentile* Idolatry. And many other things of like nature might be added. Whereas if Chriſtianity had been generally repreſented, and apprehended in its *genuine excellencies*, its amiable purity and truth, and its Divine Authority; it would have commanded a more general ſubmiſſion among men. But by the wiles of Satan, and the malice of his inſtruments, ſuch calumnies were ſpread abroad, that it was in its firſt manifeſtation *every where ſpoken againſt*, Act. 28. 22.

(*d*) Plin. Epiſt. 10. Ep. 97.

(*e*) Juſt. Apol. 2.

6. *Secondly*, The practice of this ſin is inconſiſtent with *true piety* and integrity of heart. For as the fruit ſhews the nature of the tree; ſo an ill-governed tongue is a plain evidence of a corrupt heart, and ſpeaks paſſion and uncharitableneſs to prevail there, where meekneſs and love ſhould take place. This our Lord teſtifies, *Mat.* 12. 34, 35. *Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth ſpeaketh. A good man out of the good treaſure of his heart, bringeth forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treaſure of his heart, bringeth forth evil things.* And this is that which the uſual obſervation of the world hath teſtified; as (*f*) *Hierocles* declared, men ſpeak either good, or evil, ſutably to the contrary inclinations of their minds. There is indeed ſome difference here, between the evil and the good heart. The man of a malicious ſpirit, may ſometimes ſpeak fair, and ſmoothly even unto *flattery*, and a wicked man may ſpeak good words, and act the *hypocrite*; and the reaſon of this is, becauſe an evil

2. *It is inconſiſtent with true Holineſs.*

(*f*) Hierocl. in Pyth. Carm. p. 140. εἰκότως ταῖς ἐναντίαις διαθέσεσι.

evil heart may incline the man to *diſſemble* and ſpeak falſly; but ſuch words though they carry a fair appearance, are evil words, becauſe full of *fraud*, unfaithfulneſs and diſſimulation. But where the heart is good and upright, there true integrity prevails; and though an evil man may in many outward things, ſpeak and do as the good man doth, out of *hypocriſie*, and ſtill continue wicked; no good man can ſpeak and do evil things, according to the practice of the ſinful and vicious perſon; and whoſoever doth ſo, muſt be *really wicked*; becauſe goodneſs and uprightneſs, both hate all counterfeiting and *diſſembling*, and all other compliances with ſin and evil.

and ſpeaks a prevalency of ſin.

7. But there is ſo much evil and wickedneſs contained under this ſin of *defaming others*, that a great part of the teſtimony which the Apoſtle gave, of the *Jews* being eſtranged from true goodneſs and piety, and being under ſin, is included herein. He declares from the writings of the Old Teſtament, *Rom.* 3. 13, 14, 15. *Their throat is an open Sepulchre, with their tongues they have uſed deceit, the poyſon of aſps is under their lips. Whoſe mouth is full of curſing and bitterneſs. Their feet are ſwift to ſhed blood*, &c. Now the ſenſe of moſt part of theſe words, is plainly contained in this ſin I am declaring againſt. And when the Apoſtle mentions their *mouth being full of curſing*, it may be worthy our obſervation, that contumelious ſpeaking againſt and *reproaching* others, doth in ſome degree, really include in it, the true and proper nature of *curſing*; it being a plain declaration of the perſons wiſhing and *deſiring evil*, to him of whom he ſpeaks. And what S. *Paul* adds, that their *feet are ſwift to ſhed blood*, even this is frequently the natural effect of the ſame ſin. For when men by *evil ſpeaking*, eſpecially of their Superiours, have wrought themſelves and others, into a greater diſlike of them, and hatred towards them, how oft this hath fomented *fierce paſſions*, and wrought diſpoſitions to cruelty, and put men upon inſurrections and forwardneſs of *ſhedding blood*; the Hiſtories of all times, and the remembrance of this laſt Age in our own Nation,

will

will give undeniable evidence. Now ſuch a temper, (which gives an apparent indication, that they who practiſed ſuch things, were turned aſide from God, and the ways of piety,) cannot be thought reconcileable with the holineſs, and purity of the Chriſtian Religion.

8. *Thirdly*, This practice is mighty dangerous, with reſpect to mens great and *eternal intereſts*. Many are too negligent in calling themſelves to an account for their *words*, but God hath aſſured us, that at the great day he will take an account of them, and will not then allow that liberty, that men now give themſelves in *evil ſpeaking*, but even this ſin may be ſufficient to bring upon them *eternal condemnation*. Our Lord hath declared, *Matt.* 12. 36, 37. *That of every idle word, men ſhall give an account in the day of Judgment. For by their words, they ſhall be juſtified; and by their words, they ſhall be condemned.* And theſe words of our Saviour, are ſo ſolemn and weighty, as laying down a rule of proceeding, in the *future judgment* and condemnation; that they ought not to be ſlighted and diſregarded, but to be ſeriouſly pondered, and conſidered. Many of the ancient Writers, interpret this Text concerning ſuch words as were *not uſeful* and profitable to *edification*. Thus S. *Baſil*, S. *Hierom*, *Greg. Magnus*, and others. And (*g*) *Irenæus* mentions them as ſuch a Doctrine of our Saviour, whereby he *advanceth* and exalteth the Chriſtian Religion, and the rules and precepts thereof. And it is thence inferred, that if ſuch words which are not of *uſe to good*, ſhall be under the heavy condemnation of the great Day, much more thoſe which are *contumelious*, and include evil.

3. *It expoſeth the offender to condamnation.*

(*g*) Iren. adv. Hæreſ. l. 4. c. 31.

9. But this *ſtrict interpretation*, would deny Chriſtians the liberty of ordinary converſation, and that freedom of familiar ſpeaking, concerning common affairs, which is neceſſary thereunto, and it cannot well be thought that our Saviour, whoſe *yoke is eaſie*, would lay ſuch a ſevere reſtraint upon his Diſciples, under pain of eternal damnation. And therefore the notion entertained by *Grotius*, and Dr. *Hammond*, that by every *idle word*, is underſtood every *falſe and evil*

Mat. 12. 36. *Concerning every idle word explained.*

evil word, (including what is unseemly, and unbecoming Sobriety) is the much more probable sense of our Saviours speech; and the account they give of it, is very reasonable and considerable. And this is a sense that wants not the authority of some of the Ancients. Thus *Theophylact* expounds these words, and so doth also S. *Chrysostome*, both upon S. *Matthew*, and (*h*) elsewhere. And (*i*) *Eusebius* declares, that upon account of these words of our Saviour, the Christians would not admit either any *lye*, *or any reproach*, *nor any filthy*, *nor any unseemly word*.

(*h*) Chrys. Serm. 62. in Paralyt.

(*i*) Eus. præp. Ev. l. 1. μήτε ψεῦδ Θ, μήτε λοιδορίαν, ἤτε τι ἀισχρὸν ἢ ἀχημον ῥῆμα.

10. This sense is also agreeable to the manner of the Scripture expression, in divers other places, where it speaks of things, and words *hurtful* and evil, under such phrases, as most directly signifie their being *not useful*. Thus S. *Paul* calls such words, as turn men from piety, κένους λόγους, *empty or vain words*, Ephes. 5. 6. and κενοφωνίας, *empty or vain babling*, 1 Tim. 6. 20. 2 Tim. 2. 16. and the expressions of an *empty word*, and an *idle word*, are not much unlike; but under that phrase the Apostle evidently intends, wicked and sinful words. So when the Idols of the *Gentiles* are oft called *vanities*, as *Act.* 14. 15. and the adhering to them, *a becoming vain in their imaginations*, Rom. 1. 21. it is not only intended that these things are void of goodness, but that they are things *abominable*. So the Apostle intends, that it will be of *pernicious* consequence to men, when those who *watch for their souls*, *give up their account with grief*, when he only expresseth it to be *unprofitable*, Heb. 13. 17. And the Holy Scripture calls the works of darkness *unfruitful*, when it designs them to be accounted *hurtful*, Ephes. 5. 11.

11. And this interpretation of these words of our Lord, accords very well with the truth delivered in other Scriptures, that *revilers* and *lyars*, *shall not inherit the Kingdom of God*, and that his Religion is vain, who bridleth not his tongue. It is very suitable also to the occasion, on which our Saviour spake these words, which was the *Pharisees* defaming his *Miracles*, and him in working them; as if he did them by *Beelzebub*. And therefore this speech hath a particular

particular reſpect to words of *calumny*; and ſpeaks the heavy doom of ſuch perſons, as pleaſe themſelves with ſpeaking evil of others, when Chriſt himſelf ſhall come to judge. Let every Chriſtian therefore ſtand in awe of this *threatning* of our Lord, and carefully obſerve that precept of S. *James*, Jam. 2. 12. *So ſpeak ye, and ſo do, as thoſe that ſhall be judged by the law of liberty.* Both our words and actions will be hereafter judged, according to that Goſpel, which paſſeth a Sentence againſt reproaching expreſſions. And the Goſpel is ſuch a *law of liberty*, that beſides other advantages, they who will ſeriouſly mind their duty, may under it, and by the grace thereof, be ſet *free* from the power and rule of their paſſions and luſts: and therefore the *ſerving* theſe under the grace of the Goſpel, is utterly inexcuſable.

The ſad doom of Reproachers hence obſerved.

12. *Fourthly*, The good and pious government of the tongue, is a very conſiderable *perfection* in the practice of Religion. For this manifeſts ſuch a perſon, to have gotten the victory over the *paſſions*, and diſorderly motions of his mind, which are apt in others to diſcover themſelves by *raſh words*; the tongue being a quick and glib mover, and oft forward to expreſs any prevailing irregular diſcompoſure of the Spirit. Hence *Jam.* 3. 2. *If any man offend not in word, the ſame is a perfect man, and able alſo to bridle the whole body.* But theſe words of that Apoſtle muſt be ſo underſtood, as to ſpeak particularly the perfection of him, who thus behaves himſelf, upon the true *principles of Chriſtianity*. For it muſt be acknowledged, that paſſionate and reproachful words, may be ſuppreſſed in ſome, by the advantage of their *natural temper*, of mildneſs and *courteouſneſs*, which doth not much encline them to this ſin, whilſt they live in the practice of others. In others they may be reſtrained by the rules of *policy and ſubtilty*, and a ſtrong reſolution in the managing of ſome deſign; and much may be done in others by mere rational and *Philoſophical conſiderations*. There are many inſtances among the ancient Philoſophers, and their followers, of ſuch perſons as

4. A pious government of the tongue, is an excellent Chriſtian perfection.

gained a considerable mastery of their passions, and a great command of their words and actions. Among others, *Socrates* was a rare instance hereof, if he came any thing nigh that admirable character, that (*k*) *Xenophon* gives him, That *no man ever saw* Socrates *do any action, or heard him speak any word, that was contrary to Religious piety, or unholy.* This was mighty considerable, though we understand it, only with respect to the rules of morality, admitted under the *Pagan Philosophy.* And it is unbecoming Christians, to come short of such examples, when their Religion doth so wonderfully go beyond all the principles, of *Ethnick* Philosophy.

(*k*) Xenoph. Memor. l. 1. p. 710. Οὐδεὶς πώποτε Σωκράτους οὔδ' ἀσεβὲς, οὔδ' ἀνόσιον, οὔτε ποιοῦντος εἶδεν, οὔτε λέγοντος ἤκουσεν.

13. *Christianity* tends to bring men into a lively sense of the only *true God*; to a clear knowledge of that excellent *revelation*, delivered by our Saviour; it guides unto that universal *purity*, which excludes all the Idolatry, and other vices, which the most refined Paganism did admit; it sheweth *obedience* to its precepts, to be of the highest concernment imaginable; from the plainest manifestation of the great account, and judgment to come, and the future state either of endless glorious perfection, or of intolerable torment. And it also most expressly manifests the great necessity of well *governing the tongue*, both as to the practice of Religion, and the obtaining everlasting happiness; and it affords the aids and *grace* of the Holy Spirit, to assist and enable us, to the performance of all those duties, it injoyns upon us. Now this Religion cannot be received in any considerable degree, by them who entertain the practice of *evil speaking* and reproaching; which is contrary and opposite to it, to the author of it, and to the obtaining the good it proposeth to its followers. But where the true *fear of God*, and a conscientious regard to all the rules of the Christian life, have prevailed, for the well-ordering of the *tongue*; it may be expected that they will have a like power and efficacy, for the government of the *whole man.* And where this member is disordered, it becomes an incendiary, and as a pestilential Contagion, spreads

where this is wanting, the Christian spirit hath not had its due effect.

ſpreads abroad venome and evil: and in S. *James*'s expreſſion, it *ſets on fire the courſe of nature, and it is ſet on fire of hell*; who alſo ſaith it is *a world of iniquity, and defileth the whole body*, Jam. 3. 6. And the Great miſcarriages of the tongue, which in that Chapter are complained of, with divers earneſt and emphatical expreſſions, appear plainly to be the *cenſuring* and ſpeaking evil of others, and the promoting and exciting *ſtrife* and contention.

Sect. I.

CHAP. II.

The excessive disorders, *and unreasonable* extravagancy *of speaking evil, when men give way to their passions and uncharitable temper, manifested especially from the Censures our Saviour underwent.*

SECT. I.

The best deserving persons, *are oft under obloquy and undeserved Censure.*

THese things being premised, I shall now come to discourse

1. Of the great *disorder* of an ill-governed tongue, in censuring and reproaching. 2. Of the *sinfulness* of this practice, and the great *guilt* thereof.

2. *First,* The tongue is such an *unruly evil,* as S. *James* calls it, *Jam.* 3. 8. that when men indulge themselves in uncharitableness, and censoriousness, it puts them upon the contriving, or pursuing the most unaccountable, and *unreasonable calumnies* and slanders. Good *Hezekiah* shall fall under the lavish revilings of a *Rabshakeh*; and his reformation excellently and piously performed, will be condemned as *impious.* And Christianity it self was made a matter of reproach by *Saul,* whilst he was a *blasphemer, a persecuter, and injurious,* and by many others who professed themselves enemies unto it: and the Christians in general were spoken of as *evil doers,* 1 Pet. 2. 12. But we cannot better discern how ungovernable and extravagant the censorious

Censoriousness is unruly, and wonderfully extravagant.

ſorious and uncharitable tongue is, than by conſidering the inſtances of our *bleſſed Saviour*, and other excellent men. Even the Holy Jeſus when he converſed upon Earth, eſcaped not the ſharp and bitter reproaches of reviling tongues, though he deſerved no cenſure, nor gave any juſt occaſion for any. And therefore what he and other good men met with, will abundantly manifeſt the *ſtrange unruline ſs* of a defaming temper, which is contained under no bounds, and limits of *truth, juſtice or charity.*

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The perſons conſidered who bear reproach.

3. This may eſpecially appear by our enquiring into three things: 1. What the great *excellencies* were, notwithſtanding which he and the beſt of men have ſuffered reproach? 2. Who thoſe *perſons* were by whom they were reviled and evil ſpoken of? 3. What ſome part of the *accuſation* and charge was, which they drew up againſt him; and other pious men?

Chriſt himſelf, and the moſt worthy perſons not ſecure from it.

4. *Qu.* 1. What were the great *excellencies* of our Lord, and other good men, notwithſtanding which they underwent reproach? And theſe were ſo exceeding eminent in him, and manifeſted by ſuch full and undeniable evidence; that it may be juſt matter of wonder, that they ſhould not be generally *admired*, and that all who converſed with him, ſhould not mightily reverence him. Hence (*a*) *Origen* was of opinion, that even on this account our Lord might forbear to *anſwer* any thing before *Pilate*, to the falſe Witneſſes who appeared againſt him, becauſe his pure and *innocent life* was a ſufficient confutation of their falſe teſtimony. It muſt indeed be acknowledged, that no other perſon upon Earth, ever was ſo excellent as he was. But hereupon the conſidering how he was treated among men, is ſo much the more convictive evidence, that it may be the lot of the *moſt worthy men*, to be traduced and *defamed* in the World. And if this was the Maſters portion; it is the leſs to be wondred, if any of his Servants meet with the ſame; and as himſelf had ſaid, *if they call the maſter of the houſe Beelzebub, how much more will they call them of his houſehold?* Mat. 10. 25.

(*a*) Orig. cont. Celſ. l. 1. τὸν βίον αὐτῶ ἐλέγχειν ψευδομαρτυρίαν.

For,

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1. *Persons signally pious and good, are oft evil spoken of.*

For,

5. *First*, He was the *most holy person*. He did *no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth, and yet he was reviled*, 1 Pet. 2. 22, 23. Innocency and purity in the highest measure, (yea even in him above all measure) are no sufficient security, for the avoiding censures. But if the best and most holy men, will not seek to comply with the humours of them, who are eagerly bent to serve their errors, even this their firm and *stedfast uprightness* and integrity, shall turn to their reproach. And there is so much hurry and fury in disordered passions, that it is as reasonable to expect, that a *storm and tempest* should avoid every fruitful tree, as that uncharitable and undeserved censures, should not be fixed upon any good men, Satan will find some matter of reflexion to cast upon *Job*, though God himself gives him this character, that he was a *perfect and upright man, one that feared God, and eschewed evil*. Even while the *Scribes and Pharisees* were in great vogue, with the people, and highly admired by them; the blessed Jesus, whose holy *life and doctrine* might recommend him, to every mans conscience, was *despised and rejected*. And the true Prophets who were sent before our Lord, were hated, reproached, and their *name cast out as evil*, Luk. 6. 22, 23. whilst the *false Prophets*, who complyed with the disordered inclinations of the people, were so acceptable to them, that *all men spake well* of them, v. 26. The best and most faithful and sincere men, deserve a general applause; but they so rarely meet with any thing like it, that our Saviour declared, *wo be to you when all men speak well of you*, Luk. 6. 26.

6. And since the progress of Christianity, the most *excellent persons* have in the several ages of the Church, oft undergone the most *undeserved calumnies*, from other professed Christians. Thus (*b*) *Athanasius* was falsly charged by his adversaries, with *disloyalty*, with *sacrilegious irreverence*, to the most holy Mysteries of Christianity, with *uncleanness*, cruel acts of *violence*, and other such like heinous crimes; from all which, he cleared himself to the shame and confu-

(g) Athan. Ap. ad Constant. & alib.

sion

ſion of his accuſers. S. *Baſil* in ſeveral of his (*c*) Epiſtles, takes notice of the various and injurious aſperſions, which were caſt upon him, even of ſo high a nature, that he was reported to be a *blaſphemer* and a *mad-man*. And the like might be obſerved concerning *Gr. Nazianzen*, S. *Auſtin*, and divers other perſons of incomparable worth, and ſingular eminency in the Chriſtian Church. And it is a thing too frequent and obvious, that when the Profeſſors of Chriſtianity, are divided into different *parties and intereſts*, they who are the worſt ſpirited men, are forward to act, as enemies do in war; if they know any man of the *greateſt worth*, who is of the oppoſite ſide, if he be within their reach, they will eſpecially endeavour to *wound and ſtrike* at him. But ſuch things ſhew how far they are gone aſide from *true Chriſtianity*, while they pretend to be zealous for it.

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(*c*) Baſil. Ep. 33, 75, 79, 86, &c.

7. But the truly pious man, though ſo far as concerns his detractors, and thoſe who are miſguided by them, he is *grieved*, and affected with tender pity and compaſſion, to ſee how Satan beguiles and enſnares them, to their own hurt; yet ſo far as concerns himſelf, he can bear the undeſerved cenſures of his integrity with *inward comfort* and peace, and an *indiſturbed mind*. Yea he can, as S. *Paul* did, *take pleaſure in reproaches*, 2 Cor. 12. 10. upon the great encouragement given by our Saviour himſelf, *Mat.* 5. 11, 12. *Bleſſed are ye when men ſhall revile, and perſecute you, and ſhall ſay all manner of evil againſt you falſly for my ſake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven.* Thus (*d*) S. *Auſtin* begins his Book againſt *Julian* the *Pelagian*, in telling him, that he ſhould not *ſpeak the truth*, if he ſhould ſay he did contemn and not *regard the ſlanders* and reviling words, which *Julian* had uttered againſt him; for they were *matter of joy* to him, ſo far as concerned himſelf; but they adminiſtred occaſions of *ſorrow* ſo far as concerned *Julian*, who wrote them, and thoſe who were *ſeduced* and deceived by him. But they who allow themſelves to defame the beſt men, will be far from finding comfort at laſt in theſe

(*d*) Aug. cont. Jul. l. 1. c. 1.

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these practices; since *he that justifies the wicked, and he that condemns the just; even they both are an abomination to the Lord*, Prov. 17. 15.

2. *Men who are most serviceable to the world, and do most good in it, are oft misrepresented.*

8. *Secondly*, The Holy Jesus was one, whose business and care it was, wholly to *do good*, and yet met with much contumelious reproach. He came to make all *eternally happy*, who would be guided by him; and took the most effectual course, for the compleat accomplishing the true advancement of man, and managed the designs of *goodness* to the best and highest purposes. He came to recover man from a sad and dangerous estate; and his promoting the great welfare of men was manifest, from the *holiness* of his doctrine, which wonderfully purified the minds of men; and from the outward acts of his power being employed for good, in casting out Devils, healing all that were diseased, and such like excellent works. And he was as (e) *Clemens Alexandrinus* speaks (with some allusion to the name *Jesus*, as if it had been from ἰᾶσθαι, to heal) one that *heals and cures both the bodies, and the souls of men.* Yet he who *went up and down doing good*, was evil spoken of. Such were the *unkind returns*, which his greatest kindness and care met with! And this is frequently the fate of the most useful and serviceable men in their generations.

(e) Cl. Alex. Strom. l. 1. ὁ ἰώμενος ἡμῶν καὶ σῶμα καὶ ψυχὴν Ἰησοῦς.

9. Evil and mischievous men deserve to be accounted *infamous* by all, and to be severely punished also. But they are under gross mistakes, who set themselves against their most *faithful friends*, as if they were their chiefest enemies; and yet this is very common among men When the *Apostles* of our Lord, used their utmost endeavours and diligence, to acquaint men with the truth of Religion, to turn them from Satan to God, and to make them happy; and to that end had undergone many dangers, necessities, difficulties and sufferings; they were still so far defamed and reproached, as to be accounted as the *filth of the world*, and the *off scowring of all things*. And when *David*'s ruling *Israel*, was managed with that faithfulness and prudence, that the Holy Ghost testified, that he *fed them according to the integrity*

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tegrity of his heart, and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands, Psal. 78. 72. Yet by the smooth tongue, and subtle insinuations of *Absolom*, his government was wholly misrepresented, as if he had taken no care of justice and righteousness, 2 *Sam.* 15. 3, 4. And the people hereby became so *deluded*, that *Absolom stole the hearts of the men of Israel*, v. 6.

And so hath the infinitely good God been spoken against.

10. And besides many other instances, which might easily be given in the History of the World; it is remarkable that when *God* himself had framed man after his own Image, given him the Dominion of other Creatures, and planted him in a Paradise and place of delight and pleasure; there wanted not an *accusation* against him, and his government, as if he intended to keep man in an *unreasonable subjection*, and to debar him of that perfection of state which he might otherwise have obtained, *Gen.* 3. 5. And when he had given that admirable instance of his *care*, and favour towards *Israel*, in bringing them out of *Egypt*, with a mighty hand, and guiding and feeding them miraculously in the Wilderness, by his wonderful power; yet how oft did they *speak against God* in the desart, even whilst he was following them with his goodness: Wherefore there is much of truth, in what was observed by (*f*) *Seneca*, that among all the great vices, which prevail in the world, there is none more frequent, than to want a *grateful sense* of the receiving of good. And though as he observes, the fierce wild beasts, as the *Lion* and the *Elephant* express a kind apprehension of the benefits and good, which they receive from those who take care of them, yet even among men there are those, *qui pessime loquuntur de optime meritis*, who defame that which deserves the highest commendation.

(*f*) de beneficiis l. 1. c. 1, &c.

This unreasonable sin is pernicious to the practisers.

11. From these instances I have given, it may appear, what an unaccountable thing it is, to be led by, or even to give heed unto, the *aspersions* and defaming expressions of unruly tongues, which oft-times speak licentiously against the Heavens, and against the most deserving men upon Earth. But the *evil* and *danger* of these practices, is as con-

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ſiderable, as the *diſorder*, folly and unreaſonableneſs, of them. In every one of the inſtances I mentioned, it went very ill with the evil-ſpeaker. They who ſpake againſt *God in the wilderneſs*, were ſmitten with various dreadful judgments, and they periſhed in the Deſart. Our *firſt Parents* who were beguiled, to hearken to ſuggeſtions, againſt the Laws and Precepts of their Maker in Paradiſe, were diſpoſſeſſed of their *Eden*, and brought great calamities on themſelves, and upon all their poſterity to this day. *Abſolom* and they who were perſwaded by him into an undeſerved ill opinion of *David*, and were drawn in to oppoſe his government, were deſtroyed; and a very great ſlaughter followed of the *men of Iſrael*. And all thoſe who deſpiſed our *Saviour and his Apoſtles*, and their Doctrine, deprived themſelves thereby, of the admirable benefits of that great ſalvation.

3. *The defaming tongue gives not due reverence to thoſe who have divine authority,*

12. *Thirdly*, Our Lord was one, who came inveſted with the *higheſt authority*, which was fully atteſted; and yet he was diſreſpected and diſhonoured. He was ſent from God, and what he ſpake and acted was in his name. The *authority of God* deſerves, and commands reverence from men, and it is a preſumptuous boldneſs, to treat ſuch perſons without due honourable reſpect, whoſe office and buſineſs is appointed and ordained of God, and where themſelves bring ſufficient evidence of this Divine Authority. He who honoureth a *Prince*, will expreſs a reverent demeanour to all thoſe, who act in managing any high office, in his name, and by his ſpecial commiſſion. And where there is a true honour and *fear of God*, it will engage an hearty reſpect, for all thoſe who are eſtabliſhed by him. But ſuch is the wild extravagancy of a diſorderly tongue, led by the heat and violence of paſſion, that it ſo far caſts off the *ſenſe of God and his fear*, as to dare raſhly to vent it ſelf, againſt thoſe perſons, towards whom God himſelf hath particularly enjoyned, and required an honourable eſteem, and awful reverence.

13. The

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13. The bleſſed Jeſus was the only *Son of God*, and his *miſſion* from God was ſufficiently evidenced, by the *Prophecies*, which were accompliſhed in him; by the teſtimony of S. *John Baptiſt*, of the *Angels*, and of the *voice* from Heaven; by the heavenlineſs and Divine Character of his *Doctrine*, and by all the mighty *miracles*, which he wrought. From hence even *Joſephus* (whoſe words have been obſerved, by divers very ancient Chriſtian Writers) ſpake of him with that honour and eſteem, that he calls him (*g*) *a wiſe man, if it be fit to call him a man.* Yet he who came in his Fathers name, was rejected and reviled; and they reſolvedly deſpiſed him, and *cenſured* his perſon, and the *miracles* which they beheld, and the power by which he wrought them; while they might plainly enough diſcern, that he was ſent from God, and that his Miracles were Divine. And this ſtrange refractory *perverſeneſs* in their deportment againſt him and his works, and the teſtimony of the Holy Spirit in them hath been (*h*) juſtly eſteemed, to be the main thing contained in the *ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt.* And that behaviour muſt needs contain in it a very high guilt, which excludeth ſo much obſtinacy againſt God. And his Apoſtles were not only defamed by the falſe Apoſtles, but *Diotrophes* alſo prateth againſt them with malicious words, 3 *Joh.* 10.

(*g*) Joſeph. Ant. Jud. l. 18. c. 4. Ἰησοῦς σοφὸς ἀνὴρ, εἰγε ἀνδρα αὐτὸν λέγειν χρή.

(*h*) Amb. de pœnit. l. 2. c. 4. Athanaſ. in illud, Quicunq; dixerit verbum contra filium hominis, &c.

14. Now both *Miniſters* in the Church, and *Governours* in the Kingdom, are alſo eſtabliſhed by Gods Authority, and an honourable deportment towards them is ſtrictly enjoyned by the Sanctions of his Law. When our Saviour ſent forth not only the Apoſtles, but even the Seventy Diſciples, he declared unto them, *Luk.* 10. 16. *He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that deſpiſeth you, deſpiſeth me; and he that deſpiſeth me, deſpiſeth him that ſent me.* And the authority of ſecular Governours is ſo great, that *the powers that be, are ordained of God: whoſoever therefore reſiſteth the power, reſiſteth the ordinance of God, and they that reſiſt ſhall receive to themſelves damnation.* And ſo far as the laws of God prevail on the minds and tongues of men, they will check

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and silence rash and defaming expressions against them. S. *Paul* mentions this, as one of those precepts of the law, which lay a strict obligation upon Christians, under the Gospel, *Act.* 23. 5. *Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.* Yea, the commands of God will not allow so much, as an uncharitable thought, *Eccl.* 10. 20. *Curse not the King, no not in thy thought.*

15. *Tertullian* gave a true account, of the rules of Christianity, and of the temper and spirit, of the ancient *primitive Christians* of his age, who endured heavy sufferings; when he declares, that (*i*) our Religion allows not us, to *desire, act, speak, or think evil* toward any, much less towards *Governours*, whom we must honour and reverence, as appointed by God. But it is a just matter of lamentation, that the *divine authority of Governours*, is little regarded among many men, who profess Christianity; which is a great testimony, that true Religion and a sense of God is not duly entertained. That in our age, a very great part of men are forward, rashly to *censure* and speak dishonourably, both against *secular rulers*, and the *Bishops* and Ministers of the Church, is a thing so plain and obvious, that observing men cannot but take notice of it, and pious and good men are heartily grieved at it. And this misbehaviour towards the *pious Bishops* of the Church, was also many ages since observed, and complained of; and the ill effects thereof were in some measure provided against, by the Canon of a (*k*) General Council, when discords and divisions prevailed in the Church. And such calumnies, as *Balsamon* there observeth, *Satan* doth much endeavour to foment and cherish.

(*i*) Apol. c. 36. & ad Scap. c. 2.

This contrary to the primitive Christian simplicity,

(*k*) Concil. Constant. c. 6.

16. Thus *Corah* and his company, were forward with presumptuous confidence, to speak against *Moses* their *chief Ruler*, and *Aaron* the *Priest*, slandering and opposing them; and this pleased the Congregation of *Israel*, who were too ready to comply with them. But this was so provoking to God, and so pernicious to the *Israelites*, that there were many exceeding severe punishments, inflicted by God upon the

but agreeable to the presumption of Core.

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the *Iſraelites* for theſe offences. For, *Numb.* 16. the *earth opened its mouth*, and ſwallowed up *Corah* and his company; the *fire* from the Lord, conſumed thoſe men, who intruded themſelves into the office of the Prieſt, to offer Incenſe; and a *dreadful plague* brake out upon the Congregation, and deſtroyed ſuddenly fourteen thouſand and ſeven hundred; but was ſtayed by *Aarons* making atonement. And theſe things are ſo far written for our *examples*, that where-ever the like ſins are committed, under the time of Chriſtianity, they are as evil and *deſtructive*, as they were under the law of *Moſes*; ſince the Goſpel gives particular *precepts*, for the *honouring Superiours*, and *threats* upon the neglect of them; and S. *Jude* declares, concerning ſuch diſobedient perſons, who ſwerved from the true Spirit of Chriſtianity, and *deſpiſe dominion*, that they *periſhed in the gainſaying of Core*, Jude 11.

4. Men of the ſweeteſt and meekeſt behaviour, are roughly dealt with by virulent tongues.

17. *Fourthly*, Our Saviour was a perſon of *admirable meekneſs*, but neither did this preſerve him from detraction and calumny. He had no proud and *haughty carriage*, he injured no man, by word or deed, nor gave them any juſt provocation. It is frequent in the world, that words and actions of *ſtrife* and contention, do kindle more ſtrife, though they ought not ſo to do. If a ſtorm be begun, one wave will raiſe another; but in a perfect calm, to ſee the Sea grow boiſterous of it ſelf, is ſomewhat unuſual. And whereas a *fiery fierceneſs* of temper, is apt to kindle heats and diſturbances, it was obſerved in the *writings of the Jewiſh Authors*, that the reſult or end of *meekneſs* (*l*) is welfare, peace and quiet; and ſo it frequently is, both to mans ſelf, and to them with whom he converſeth: but it was much otherwiſe in the *practice of the Jewiſh Nation*, towards him who was the great pattern of meekneſs, gentleneſs and patience.

(*l*) אחרית ענוה שלום

Licentious expreſſions not juſtified when occaſioned by provocations;

18. Indeed it is ſinful for any Chriſtians, to give way to their paſſions, and unbecoming expreſſions, though they meet with *provocations*. Theſe provocations are *temptations* laid before them, but their Religion teacheth them, to be-

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beware of and *reject* temptations, and not to yield to them, and suffer themselves to be overcome, and prevailed upon by them. Even when the *Israelites provoked Moses*, so *that he spake unadvisedly with his lips it went ill with him*, Psal. 106. 32, 33. And when S. *Paul* was smitten, *contrary to the law*, Act. 23. he in that case, acknowledgeth the obligation of this duty, *Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people*. And the Doctrine of Christianity obligeth its Professors, *to love their enemies, to bless them which curse them, and to pray for them who despitefully use them, and persecute them*. The precepts of some of the (*m*) *Ethnick Philosophers* went so far, as to condemn the *returning injuries* to them, from whom we receive wrong: and some rare instances there are among Pagans, of some who declared they would, and others who actually did, treat them with much *kindness*, who had greatly injured them. But the *doctrine* of our Saviour, appeareth to have gone higher, than the *rules* which their wisest men prescribed, in enjoining as a *necessary duty* the exercise of *love*, kindness, doing good unto, and *praying for our enemies*.

(*m*) Plat. in Crit. Maxim. Tyr. Diss. 2.

19. But that Religion which will not allow of *passion*, and *reviling*, where there may be some considerable *occasion* given; will much more detest it, in such cases, where there is truly no such occasion. For this most clearly shews such men, to be much more hurried and commanded, by a swelling rage and tumult of *disorderly affections*; than by the Christian temper, the precepts of our Lord, and the Spirit of God, who is a Spirit of meekness and peace. But though *meekness*, which is calm and inoffensive, be far from deserving any censure or ill will; yet where men give the reins to their tongues, even the eminent practices thereof, though never so undeservedly, will be *ill treated* and defamed. Our *Saviour* was of that mild behaviour, that he was not for calling for *fire from Heaven*, to consume such as would not receive him; nor was he pleased with those his chief Apostles, who were enclined to such fierceness. And when the *Jews* who would not be perswaded by

but are more unreasonable when without any occasion given.

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by him, brought miſery upon themſelves, he was ſo far from being pleaſed with the thoughts of their calamity, that notwithſtanding all their oppoſition againſt him, when he foretold and denounced their deſtruction, he did this with tender bowels of pity and compaſſion, and with inward grief and ſorrow for them. He then *wept over the city*, and ſaid, Oh that *thou hadſt known, even thou, in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace.* Indeed he as a faithful teacher *reproved* their ſins, but he herein acted the part of a friend, as a *good governour* alſo doth, in putting a ſtop to evil by his Authority. Even Rulers prudent *executing wrath on them that do evil*, and a ſmart rebuke of offenders, is very agreeable to true meekneſs, and a well-governed meaſure of anger is here, as (*n*) *Nazianzen* calls it, *a commendable paſſion*, and none ought to pleaſe others in evil, and to their hurt. Our Lord ſo obſerved the *regular meaſures* of meekneſs and gentleneſs, that he would not allow his *fathers name* to be diſhonoured, his *houſe and worſhip* to be prophaned, and his laws to be *violated*; but this was that the *Jews* would not bear. And *Moſes* alſo the meekeſt man upon Earth, was divers times complained of, and the *Iſraelites murmured* againſt him. And it is eaſie to give other inſtances, without looking far into Hiſtory, of them whoſe innocent behaviour and *kind temper*, hath not kept them off, from being expoſed to cenſure: and they who could ſay with *Samuel, whoſe oxe, or aſs have I taken?* have been ſo dealt with and aſperſed, as if they had been the greateſt contrivers of ruine in the world.

(*n*) Naz. Carm. Iamb. τῷ δ' ἐυ καχίσων μέμψις εἰνετὸν πάθος.

20. Now if all this be duly conſidered, it will ſhew the ſtrange *exorbitancy* of the paſſionate expreſſions, and cenſorious tongues of men, and what great advantage Satan gains thereby, and into what unreaſonable practices, many men are blindfoldly carried away by this method. For they oft reproach the beſt and *moſt upright* among men; and thoſe who do the moſt *faithful ſervice* to God, and are moſt uſeful to the good of mankind; and them who are indued with the higheſt *authority*; and adorned and furniſhed with the greateſt

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greateſt *innocency*. All which is manifeſt, in the great example of the bleſſed Jeſus, and of many others the moſt deſerving perſons.

21. The Moraliſts Counſel is here of great and neceſſary uſe, to every good man, that he who will reſolve to be *honeſt and upright* (o) *muſt deſpiſe contempt* and reproach. And there is the greater reaſon for this under Chriſtianity, becauſe we therein have a clear proſpect of eternal happineſs, which we muſt purſue; and are to be followers of our Lord, who in a greater caſe than that of reproach, *for the joy that was ſet before him deſpiſed the ſhame*. No other man ever was ſo pure and excellent as he was, who both by his life and practice, and by his Doctrine and inſtruction was, as (p) *Nazianzene* ſtiles him, he who gave the compleat *perfection* to the *ſpiritual law*, and rule of life. But every Chriſtian muſt ſo far follow him, and take up his Croſs, as to be willing and reſolved to bear ſuch difficulties as theſe, or whatſoever elſe he may meet with, in the practice of his Chriſtian duty: And if any other men be never ſo unreaſonable in their *clamorous cenſures* againſt him, he muſt go on *ſteadily* in his pious exerciſes.

(o) Senec. Ep. 77. Ad honeſta vadenti, contemnendus eſt ipſe contemptus.

A good man muſt be a reſolved man.

(p) Naz. Orat. 1. πνδ᾽ ἀλικᾶσθαι τελειωτής.

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Who are apt to be prevailed with to be guilty of the ſinful reproaching *others, and how far this ſin becomes* ſpreading *and contagious.*

The ſin of rash evil-ſpeaking, takes great place among the generality of men;

1. THE proneneſs of perſons to defame and ſpeak evil of others is ſuch, that it greatly prevails among multitudes of men; and though it be a very *unworthy and unchriſtian thing*, it takes up very much of the diſcourſe, and converſe of a great part of mankind. Many there are, who being conſcious to themſelves, that they *deſerve cenſure*, are the

the more ready to blame, and find fault with others, that themſelves may not be thought worſe than other men. Some who have little of *real worth*, to commend themſelves, are the more apt to ſpeak evil of others, that they may gain to themſelves ſo much reſpect, as to be *preferred* before thoſe whom they defame: but they uſually fail in this deſign, ſince hereby thoſe whoſe reputation they reflect upon, are oft provoked to diſcredit them; and alſo they are the more condemned, and the worſe thought of by wiſe and good men, for this temper of uncharitableneſs: it being obſerved by (*a*) *Tully* that this manner of diſcourſe, gives the moſt manifeſt indication of *viciouſneſs* and corruption of manners, in him who utters it, whether it be done in a way of ſeeming *gravity* and ſeverity, or by open *ſcurrilouſneſs*, or by jocular and pleaſant *facetiouſneſs*. And ſome are ſo proud and *ſelf-conceited*, (though they have little reaſon for it) that they are not pleaſed to hear any man well ſpoken of but themſelves, and think every commendation miſplaced, that is not beſtowed upon themſelves, and this puts them into a great forwardneſs of diſparaging others; and this mixt with uncharitableneſs is the parent of *envy*, from whence (as alſo from all hatred and malice, from whatſoever occaſion they ariſe) proceedeth *evil-ſpeaking*. And ſome ſerve *ſecular intereſts*, by diſcrediting others to advance themſelves.

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(*a*) de Offic. lib. 1.

2. And others obſerving how frequent this behaviour is among men, comply with it as a thing in *faſhion*; and for ſociety ſake, joyn in paſſing the ſame cenſures that others do, merely to *gratifie the humours*, and avoid the cenſures of ſome hot and eager men. And ſome again have ſuch undeſerved *hard thoughts* of others, through ſuſpicious miſapprehenſions, and *falſe conſtructions* of their words or actions, that they think it juſt to diſparage them. And others, meerly from obſerving the *prevalency* of cenſorious reproaches, and outcries againſt ſome ſorts of men; are hereupon apt to conclude, that there is ſome conſiderable *reaſon* for all this, and that they ought to do the like,

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though they know no evil concerning these persons, nor can lay any thing to their charge. And these several sorts of men, make up so great a number, that it was the complaint of an ancient and pious Bishop, of considerable note, (*b*) that there were *very few men* who had forsaken this vice: and concerning those from whom better might be expected, he adds that even they who had *gone far off from other vices, fall into this as into the last snare of the Devil.*

(*b*) Paulin ad Celant. inter Epist. Hieronymi 14.

3. But since this hath respect to the actions and practices of men, we may best discover how largely this evil is *propagated*, by observing particular instances of fact; and none can be given more considerable, than that which concerneth our blessed Saviour. Wherefore I shall now enquire, Who they were by whom he, and other worthy men were reviled?

Vit. 1. *It is odious to the best of men.*

4. Now *First*, He was not reviled but reverenced by the *best* and most holy men, who observed and obeyed the true rules of Religion. These rendred unto him that *honour* and glory which was due to the Son of God, the Messias and Mediator of the New Testament, and the Saviour of the World. And indeed all rash evil speaking and reproaching, especially against those who deserve to be highly esteemed and honoured, is much opposite to the reason and *conscience* of man, and more especially to the true *Christian temper*, and both that *charity*, and that honesty and *integrity*, which it so much requires. It is also greatly contrary to the motions of the Holy *Spirit of God*, who disposeth good men to the performance of these Christian duties. Hence the Apostle, having commanded that men *grieve not the Holy Spirit of God*, Eph. 4. 30, 31. adds, *Let all bitterness and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from among you, with all malice.* Slandering and reproaching are of the evil one, and it is part of the character of those worst sort of men, described by S. *Jude*, that they are *murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts, and their mouth speaketh great swelling words.* But meekness, patience, humility

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mility and charity, are ſuch great and neceſſary duties, that thoſe who are ſincerely good, apply themſelves to the practice of them. And uncharitable ſpeaking, hath ſuch a contradiction to theſe and ſuch like duties, that it is very *diſtaſtful*, and *odious* to the ſpirits of ſuch pious men, who have duly conſidered the evil of it. S. *Auſtin* profeſſed ſuch an earneſt and conſtant diſlike hereof, that as (*c*) *Poſidonius* relates, he had, *contra peſtilentiam humanæ conſuetudinis*, againſt the *plague or peſt* of the cuſtome of men in their converſe, theſe two Verſes inſcribed upon his table,

(*c*) Poſid. de Vit. Aug c. 22.

Quiſquis amat dictis abſentum rodere vitam,
Hanc menſam indignam noverit eſſe ſibi.

That is, *Whoſoever pleaſeth himſelf, to uſe biting words, againſt the lives of abſent perſons, let him know, that this table is no fit place for his ſociety.* And the ſame Writer tells us, that he would not with patience, hear any man ſpeak contrary to this rule of free and familiar converſation. The beſt men are not only perfect *ſtrangers* from, but *enemies* to this vicious practice; and every Chriſtian man ought watchfully to take heed of it: and if at any time he be ſurprized and overtaken thereby, he ſo far departs from the rules of his Religion, and makes himſelf work for a future *repentance*.

2. *It is frequently entertained by the publick vogue of the multitude:*

6. But *Secondly*, The *common vogue* may frequently paſs ſevere cenſures, upon the beſt of men. Even the Holy Jeſus was reviled and evil ſpoken of, by the *generality of the Jewiſh Nation*. It is true, that manifeſt and *open vice*, is a thing ſo *ſhameful*, and ſo contrary to the common ſentiments of reaſon and conſcience, that it is in all places a *blemiſh* to any mans reputation, and a juſt matter of general *cenſure*. And vertue and *goodneſs* conſidered in the notion of it, and in the practice alſo, when rightly underſtood, go under a general *commendation and applauſe*. But yet ſuch are oft-times the common *miſtakes of the multitude*, concerning perſons, that the beſt men fall under a ſuſpicion amongſt them, of harbouring ſome ſecret *evil deſign*; and men of the greateſt

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integrity and ſimplicity, are charged with being the contrivers of danger and miſchief, by the *publick voice* and clamour of the people. And it is no hard thing for *ſubtil ill-deſigning* men, or for thoſe who are themſelves *jealous*, to promote theſe miſapprehenſions amongſt others. Even the uſeful undertakings, which wiſe and good men prudently manage, with the greateſt integrity, are oft-times ſtrangely *miſunderſtood*, and the intent of them ſtrangely *miſrepreſented*, to the common eſteem of men. This was ſo much obſerved by *Socrates*, that he declared, as *Xenophon* tells us, (*d*) that it is *no eaſie thing, to undertake any work* (to wit of a publick and uſeful concern) *without undergoing blame*; becauſe it is no eaſie thing to be every where free from *real fault*; or to meet with *equal judges* where they are ſo.

(*d*) Xenoph. l. 2. Memor.

it is the more miſchievous by reaſon of its ſpreading infection.

7. And there are very many inſtances, wherein the *greater part* of the *people* have been guilty, in this particular of *judging, ſpeaking* and acting againſt their duty, and in divers of them Gods diſpleaſure was remarkably manifeſt. Thus did the *Jews* with *united votes* and clamour, engage againſt our Lord. Nor was this only the carriage of the meaneſt ſort of men, who might be thought more raſh and inconſiderate, but even their Elders and *chief rulers*, and the whole *Jewiſh Sanhedrin*, was of this temper and ſpirit. And though this gave encouragement unto others, it was not the better for them but the *worſe*, that this ſin prevailed ſo univerſally; for hence proceeded the *ruine* and miſery of the *Jewiſh* Nation to this day, and the forfeiture alſo of their relation (*e*) to *God*, *to Chriſt*, and to his Church. And when after the death of *Corah*, even *all the Congregation of Iſrael murmured againſt Moſes and againſt Aaron*, Numb. 16. 41. this occaſioned a dreadful Plague. And before this the *general diſcontent* againſt the Conduct of *Moſes*, which appeared in all the Children of *Iſrael*, who reſolved to chuſe themſelves a new Governour, and to *return back to Egypt*, Numb. 14. 4. at the time when they who ſearched the land of *Canaan*, brought an *evil report upon it*, did provoke

(*e*) Cypr. Ep. 69.

voke God to reſolve, that they ſhould all die in the Wilderneſs. Sect. II.

8. But in ſuch caſes as theſe, every good man ought to have that generous and *couragious ſpirit*, as not to be daunted or moved, even with *publick cenſure*. And he muſt eſteem his approving himſelf to God, and having the teſtimony of his own conſcience to his integrity, to be of more value, than the flattering *applauſes*, of the greateſt numbers of men. It was excellently ſpoken by (*f*) S. *Chryſoſtome*, there is *nothing ſhameful but ſin*; and *if all the world ſhall reproach thee, and thou not reproach thy ſelf, there is no ſhame* in all this. But it is never ſafe to join with a multitude, either in the doing or ſpeaking evil. And the ſtate of every offender, when the ſin *grows common*, is upon this account the more dangerous, becauſe he is hereby the more like to be *encouraged* in his ſin, and the more unlike to repent of it: and ſometimes he may be by this means ſo emboldned in evil, as to think it ſtrange that others *run not to the ſame exceſs, ſpeaking evil of them*. And thus his caſe is like that of a man, who is carried away with a fierce and violent ſtream, which leaves but little hopes of his eſcaping drowning. Wherefore it is as reaſonable, that men be careful to avoid ſpreading vices, as that they ſhould be cautious and fearful of *infectious diſeaſes*.

(*f*) Chryſ. Hom. in Pſ. 44.

9. *Thirdly*, This diſorder is prone to prevail, not only among men of careleſs and negligent tempers; but alſo among them who are *ſtrict*, ſcrupulous and *conſcientious* in matters of Religion. Thus was our Maſter treated with infamous reproaches, by them who were *zealous* for the honour of God Such were the *Phariſees*, and the devouter ſort of the *Jewiſh* Nation: ſuch was S. *Paul* himſelf before his converſion, being *exceeding zealous* for the law, and yet a *blaſphemer, and injurious*. And ſuch were thoſe unbelieving *Jews*, to whom S. *Paul* bears record, that they had a *zeal for God, but not according to knowledge*, Rom. 10. 2. Theſe were members of the *Jewiſh* Church, were ſtrict in many things, both of *practice* and *opinion*, and were very earneſt

3 *It is a ſin earneſtly purſued by many who appear ſtrict and zealous about Religion.*

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earnest to make Proselytes. And besides the other Sects of the *Jews*, who all joyned together against our Lord, the holy Scriptures represent none more *vehement*, in their oppositions, and reproaches, than the *Pharisees*, who as S. *Paul* declares, were of the exactest and *straitest Sect of the Jewish Religion*, Acts 26. 5. And though *Josephus* sometimes prefer the *Essens* before them, yet he also tells us, that (*g*) the *Pharisees* were reputed to be more Religious than other men, and more strict in their interpretation of the laws. But there was so much *pride and passion*, mixed with their *zeal*, that they were vehement against those, who did not comply with them, in laying a *great stress* upon such things, wherein Religion was not concerned, yea and upon those things also, which really tended to the undermining of true piety; and they were eager against them who would inform them better; and hence they set themselves in opposition against Christ and his Apostles.

(*g*) Joseph. de Bel. Jud. l. 1. c. 4.

Misguided zeal inflameth passions, and sharpneth tongues.

10. There is nothing that more sharpens the tongues of men against others, than the mistaken principles of a *misguided conscience*, which was that, by which the *Jews* acted against the Saviour of the World, both reviling, and crucifying him. Hence also before the great Apostle was a convert, he thought he *ought to do many things against the name of Jesus*, Act. 26. 9. And hence the Apostles and other Christians, were upbraided, and ill intreated in that high degree, that they that *killed them thought they did God service*, Joh. 16. 2. And hence divers *Hereticks*, and those who were engaged in Errors and *Schisms* and divisions, vented many contumelious and reproachful censures, against the true Church, and its members. So did the *Gnosticks*, *Montanists*, *Novatians*, *Donatists* and others anciently, and all dividing Sects of later times.

(*h*) Aug. Ep. 50. & Ep. 162. & passim.

11. For instance, the *Donatists* raised such *high accusations*, against the true Christian Church, as (*h*) to reject it from being a true Church, and not to own any but themselves to be the Church of Christ, and thereupon not only *rebaptized* all others who came to them, but by *savage cruelty* and violence,

olence, forced divers to be rebaptized. And other reproachers but not in the like degree were embraced by the other Sects. For all men who have pretended to Chriſtianity (till ſome late unreaſonable notions in our preſent age, which diſcard all obligation to viſible and external Unity, and publick communion in the offices of the Church) have been ſenſible, that they could never juſtifie their own *departure* from the Church, unleſs they could lay ſome ſuch thing to her charge, as made their *ſeceſſion neceſſary*. Among theſe ſome were more fierce and *furious*, who yielded their conſcience to the ſervice of their affections and paſſions, as too many of late have done both in the Church of *Rome*, and of other parties in our late unhappy times. And when S. *Auſtin* with lamentations ſpake of the incurſions of the Barbarous Nations into *France*, *Italy*, *Spain and Egypt*, he thought the inhumane cruelties (ſome of which he particularly mentions) of the (*i*) *Donatiſts*, and eſpecially the *Circumcelliones*, towards them who held communion with the Church, were rather *more ſavage*, than what was commited by thoſe barbarous people. And indeed, no *rage* is fiercer, than that which is enflamed by an irregular and *diſordered zeal*. And others who continue in a milder temper, though they abſtain from outrages; yet by their miſapprehenſions, are engaged in unreaſonable cenſures of the Church, and publick order, and of the Rulers who appoint and eſtabliſh it.

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(*i*) Aug. Ep. 122. Sic vaſtant Eccleſias, ut Barbarorum fortaſſe facta mitiora ſunt.

12. But *zeal* when not governed by *piety*, prudence, truth and goodneſs, and not allayed with meekneſs, is like a *fire* violently breaking out in any part of a building, which threatens the waſting and ruine of the whole. And it is never ſafe to promote or entertain unjuſt *reproaches* raiſed even by *zealous* men, when theſe very things, though they may be popularly taking to engage a party, yet are they a great *blemiſh* to their profeſſion; uncharitableneſs and *riſh cenſoriouſneſs*, being a manifeſt evidence, of the want of a true Religious temper, whereſoever it prevails. To this purpoſe, S. *James* ſpeaking of that man, who is wiſe by,

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by the *wisdom which descends from above*, or who is truly pious and Religious, directs this wise and good man, *Jam.* 3. 13. to *shew out of a good conversation, his works with meekness of wisdom.* And he then assures us, that where there is *bitter zeal or envying and strife, this wisdom discendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual and devilish*, v. 14, 15. But *the wisdom that is from above, is first pure, and then peaceable, gentle, and easie to be intreated*, or perswaded, *viz.* to what is good, just or reasonable.

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The monstrous and unreasonable strangeness *of those censures, which have been unjustly charged on the most innocent and excellent men, and particularly on our blessed Lord and Saviour himself.*

The most infamous calumny, sometimes raised against well deserving men.

1. IN sensible things with which we converse in the world, few men, if any, have the confidence to lay down assertions, directly contrary to what may be made manifest and plain, (as to affirm the *Sun* to send forth darkness, and not light; or the strait line to be crooked; or the pleasant and delightful Fountain to be bitter) and if they should, they would find no men of common understanding so weak as thereby to be imposed upon. But it oft happeneth far otherwise, in the *character* which many give of the best men, who are oft-times not only so far *misunderstood*, that their excellencies are clouded, and pass undiscerned to general view; but their pious lives fall under severe censures, and are represented as ugly and *deformed*. Thus it hapned with many *vertuous Moralists*, yea, with *Christ* himself, and many of his Disciples. And our *holy Religion* it self, as well as its author, was on this wise pierced, spit on, and reviled.

2. This

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2. This was that, which (*a*) *Xenophon* could not obſerve concerning *Socrates*, without admiration. He ſayes, he much wondred, that *Socrates*, who never *ſpake*, or *did* any thing irreligious, who had an *high reverence* for the Gods, and owned them to know all that was *ſpoken or done*, or *ſecretly conſulted* among men; and ſo behaved himſelf, that if another man ſhall ſpeak and act as he did, εἰ τις ᾗ νομίζοιτο εὐσεβέσατος, he *would both be, and be accounted*, a moſt devout and *Religious perſon*; that he ſhould be ſo far miſunderſtood, that the *Athenians* ſhould be perſwaded, that he had no ſober or worthy thoughts of the *Deity*. And (*b*) he accounted it to be a ſtrange and *wonderful thing*, that when this excellent man, was even above all other men ſtrictly *temperate* and continent, πάντων ἀνθρώπων ἐγκρατέσατος, and one who had reduced many others from their luſts and viciouſneſs, he ſhould yet be miſreported, as if he were guilty of the moſt impure and *filthy luſts*. And this inſtance ſeemed ſo ſtrange to *Xenophon*, that he begins that Book with declaring, that he had *oft wondred*, how the *Athenians* could be perſwaded, into this miſapprehenſion. And ſo might any man do in the like caſe, when he only conſiders what other men *ought* to do, and will do when they act ſuitably to their *reaſon*; but the wonder ceaſeth, when we obſerve the ſtrange diſorders of licentious *paſſions*, ill deſigns, and an uncharitable temper; and how apt they are to impoſe upon an *eaſie credulity*.

(*a*) Xenoph. l. 1. Memorab. primo.

(*b*) ibidem.

This carrieth on the deſign of Satan.

3. That the greateſt cenſures, and heavieſt reproaches, ſhould befall the beſt deſerving men, is indeed very unſuitable to them, but it exceeding well agrees with the deſigns of the *evil one*, who promotes theſe practices. It was aſſerted by the ancient Author of the Metaphraſis upon *Eccleſiaſtes*, (whether it be *Gr. Nazianzen*, or rather *Gregorius Thaumaturgus*, to whom (*c*) S. *Hierome*, and other ancient Writers, aſcribe that Metaphraſis) that calumny ἐπιχειρεῖ διαφθείρειν γενναίαν ἕνσασιν τῶν ἀγαθῶν, *attempts to corrupt and pervert, the generous firmneſs and conſtancy of good men.* And this very well agrees with the ſenſe of the *Septuagint*,

(*c*) Hier. de Scriptor. Eccleſ. in Theodoro.

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in that place, *Eccl.* 7. 8. to which those words of this Metaphrase had respect. But if calumny cannot effect this end, the evil one aims at some thing else, which by this means he more easily obtains, to hinder the *success* of worthy men, in the service of God, and Religion, and doing good in the World, and to keep off others, from *piety* and vertue.

The innocent primitive Christianity was highly traduced, as if it had been the most horrid impiety.

4. For these ends and purposes, the holy *Christian Religion* it self, and the Assembly of its followers, were charged by the *Gentiles*, with the *most horrid*, unnatural, and unreasonable *villany*, and impiety. This gave occasion to the writing sundry excellent *Apologetical discourses*, on the behalf of Christianity; as those of *Justine Martyr*, *Athenagoras*, *Tertullian*, *Arnobius*, *Origen* against *Celsus*, and many others. Divers of these horrid calumnies are collected by (*d*) *Minutius Felix*, and of them he saith, *passim omnes loquuntur*, that they were the *general vogue* of the Pagan World. And the wicked and false accusations, then drawn up against the Christians, are comprized and summed up, in these comprehensive words of (*e*) *Tertullian*, *Christianum hominem omnium scelerum reum, Deorum, Imperatorum, legum, morum, naturæ totius inimicum existimans*; that they accounted the Christian to be a person guilty of *all villany, and to be an enemy to the Deity, to the Emperour, to the law, to morality, and to the whole course of nature.* And what worse can be said of the most wretched, debauched and flagitious person! and what an *unruly thing* is passionate reproaching, when thereby the whole body of the best Society in the world, was so monstrously misrepresented!

(*d*) In Octav. à p. 23. ad 30. Ed. Ox.

(*e*) Tertul. Apol. c. 2.

5. And the same measure was meted, to the *head and Lord* of that body also. And therefore I shall here particularly take notice of several considerable things in the behaviour of the *Jews* towards our Saviour, where the strangeness of their accusations, may well *amaze* and astonish an unprejudiced person.

6. How

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6. How many *actions of reproach* and contumely did they uſe towards him; when they *ſpitted* in his face, and ſmote him with the *palms* of their hands? which defamatory acts to a *Jew* had (*f*) great penalties; and theſe were done in their open Conſiſtory, with many other expreſſions of contempt. Their procuring the *ſcourging* him, was a publick declaring that he was ſo great an offender, that he deſerved to be put to *open ſhame*: which is manifeſt from the nature of that puniſhment, from the expreſſions of the Scripture concerning it, and even from the (*g*) *Talmud*, which makes it a note of *infamy*, inflicted upon them, who were guilty of ſhameful tranſgreſſions. The like eſpecially appears in their deſiring him to be *Crucified*, which was a kind of death attended with that infamy, as well as accute pain, that the worſt of men, and moſt abject perſons in the *Roman* Empire were Sentenced to this death. But none of their Free men might be condemned to ſo vile a death, which was by (*h*) *Lactantius* from *Cicero* noted to be, the *puniſhment for vaſſals*, and not Free men. And the *Jews* in after-ages, have uſed this as an expreſſion of *ignominy*, concerning our bleſſed Saviour, when they call him by the name of תלוי or he who was *hanged* or *crucified*.

(*f*) Tr. Bava. Kam. c. 8. §. 6. & Commentar. L'Empereur. ibid.

(*g*) Tr. Maccoth. c. 3. *Chriſt himſelf was treated with many actions of reproach,*

(*h*) Lact. de Ver. Sap. c. 18.

7. And it is probable, that their putting him to death, at the time of their great and *ſolemn feaſt*, was not only done to expoſe him to the greater ſhame, at ſo great a ſolemnity, and publick concourſe, but that this alſo might have ſome reſpect to their treating him as a *falſe Prophet*. For their *Talmud* declares, that a falſe Prophet was not to be put to death in any other City but in *Jeruſalem*; and there he muſt die (*i*) at the *time of their ſolemn Feaſts, that all Iſrael may hear and fear*.

(*i*) Tr. Sanhedr. c. 10.

8. And after all theſe things ſuffered by our Lord among the *Jews*, it might be eaſie to ſhew, that the *Gentiles* beſides their perſecutions and verbal ſlanders againſt Chriſtianity, uſed various *real expreſſions*, of great diſreſpect and *diſhonour*, towards the Author of our holy Religion, and our Religion which was eſtabliſhed by him. Thus in the time

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of the Emperour *Adrian*, the Temple of *Adonis*, the Image of *Jupiter*, and the Statue of *Venus*, were erected in the places of our Lords *birth*, his *passion*, and *resurrection*, as (*k*) *Baronius* hath observed from S. *Hierome*, and *Paulinus*. But these and such other things, are much less to be wondred at, among the *Ethnicks* and *Pagans*; and therefore I shall wave any further prosecution of them, and return to the consideration of the *Jews behaviour*, toward the holy Jesus.

(*k*) An. Eccl. An. 137. n. 5, 6, 7. & An. 326. n. 28.

and with various insulting words of fury.

9. Besides such actions of the *Jews*, as I above mentioned, there were some *verbal expressions*, whereby they reviled him, which spake their mere *fury*. Such was their opprobrious insulting over him, in his bitter sufferings. In yielding themselves to the rage of their passions, they came to that high degree of expressing their enmity against him, and contempt of him, that they were not satisfied with his suffering a cruel death; but beyond all that *bloody hands* could act against him, they endeavour that their *keen tongues* might pierce him to the heart. Hence they reviled this great *Prophet*, requiring him when they smote him, to *propheſie who it was that smote him*. They derided the *King* of Kings, when they arrayed him in a *scarlet robe*, putting a *crown of thorns* on his head, and a *reed* in his right hand, *bowing the knee* in mockery, and saying, *Hail King of the Jews*. And they despised, the Saviour of the World, and the great *high Priest*, when in derision towards him upon the Cross, they cryed out, *Save thy self and us*. Here we may stand amazed to observe, how when great uncharitableness hath possessed the heart, and is let loose in the reproaches of the tongue, it becomes *cruel and fierce*, and contrary to God and goodness, and is apt to be carried on to acts, even of *savageness* and inhumanity. But because these things may seem to be done, in a time when they were in a *paroxysm* of fury, when they vented an unusual inordinate heat of rage, I shall consider what accusations, their reproachful tongues laid to the *charge of our Saviour*, for the most part, when they were in somewhat a cooler temper,

temper, and concerning which they offered ſome things as a *popular proof* or at leaſt a ſpecious pretence, plauſibly to *inſinuate* into the vulgar, that there was ſomewhat of truth in what they ſaid. Sect. III.

10. *Firſt*, He was accuſed, of not having any true *piety towards God*. He came into the world to do the will of his Father, and was a *perfect example* of all holy obedience. He ſought not his own glory, but the glory of him that ſent him, and God himſelf owned him to be his *well beloved Son, in whom he was well pleaſed*. And yet ſo maliciouſly unreaſonable was their cenſoriouſneſs, that the *Jews* charged him with being ſo much an enemy to God, as to *debaſe his honour*, undermine his authority, and ſpeak unworthily of his Majeſty. To this purpoſe, that they might render him particularly hateful to the *Jewiſh* Nation, they decipher him as an enemy to the *divine law*. The *Jews* had deſervedly an high honour for *Moſes*, and the law which was delivered by him, and had a mighty zeal to preſerve the reputation of them. They honoured *Moſes* as the moſt excellent perſon, who was in an eminent manner (*l*) a *King, a Law-giver, a Prieſt and a Prophet*, and moſt excellently diſcharged all thoſe Offices. And they had ſo great a reverence and veneration for their *law*, that *Philo* the *Jew* (as his words are produced by (*m*) *Euſebius*, out of a Book of his which he Entituled, his *Hypotheticks*) declares that the *Jews* would rather chuſe to *die a thouſand times*, than to admit of any thing contrary to the law; and the ſame (*n*) Author ſpeaks to the ſame purpoſe elſewhere. But the holy Jeſus who gave the higheſt *honour* to the law, by fulfilling it; and to *Moſes* by accompliſhing his Prophecies, was accuſed as an oppoſer of *Moſes* and the law; and to this purpoſe was at ſeveral times charged with *breaking the Sabbath*; and the *Phariſees* declared, that he was *not of God becauſe he kept not the Sabbath day*, Joh. 9. 16. And he who had that great regard to the Worſhip of God, and honour for his Temple, that *the zeal of Gods houſe did eat him up*, was reported to be ſo averſe from the

Our Lord and the beſt men have been accuſed, 1. Of want of piety and Religion.

(*l*) Phil. de Vit. Moſis. l. 3.

(*m*) Euſ. præp. Ev. l. 8. c. 6.

(*n*) Phil. de legat. ad Caium p. 1022.

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the worship of God and Religion, that he was for *destroying* the place of Gods Worship and Service, even before he had put an end to the legal Sacrifices by his perfect oblation.

11. And he was oft times accused, of that impious crime of *Blasphemy*, even by those very men, who were themselves guilty of Blasphemy, against God, and the Holy Ghost. This is esteemed an *execrable offence* among all men, who have any veneration for the Divine Majesty of God. And among the *Jews*, it was accounted so abominable, that the blasphemer must *die*, and be *stoned* by all the people; and the (*o*) *judge* who gave Sentence against him was to *rend his cloaths*; and the same was to be done also by the *witness*, who heard the words of blasphemy, as a testimony of indignation. And this the High Priest did, at the words of the blessed Jesus, *Mat.* 26. 65. *he rent his cloaths, saying he hath spoken blasphemy.* Yea, even among the *Gentiles*, a blasphemer of the Deity was thought worthy of *death*, and at *Ephesus* according to the observation of (*p*) *Baronius* out of *Philostratus*, was to be *stoned*. But the imputing such a thing as this to the holy Jesus; whose Life and Doctrine was wholly ordered, to promote his Fathers honour, is as if a Prince's best and most *faithful Subjects*, should be so misrepresented, as to be accounted the most disloyal villanous and *treacherous rebels*, and the people thereupon should be stirred up, to set themselves against them, who are their strength and upholders.

(*o*) Tr. Sanh. c. 7. §. 5.

(*p*) An. Eccles. an. 254. n. 24, 25.

Non-compliance with rigid mistaken notions, doth sometimes occasion the charge of impiety.

12. And though the *purity of his life*, did infinitely outdo any of theirs, and was without any stain of Sin, yet he must not be owned as a good man, because he was not in all things so strict, as some of their *errours* directed them to be. While they were more *severe and rigid*, he shewed himself more mild and gentle, even towards Publicans and Sinners, and hence was reviled as their *friend*. He had not that reverence for the vow of *Corban* which the *Pharisees* had, but declared against the evil of it, as making *void the Commandment of God*, which required a due honour to Father and Mother.

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Mother. Nor had he that opinion of the reſt of the *Sabbath day*, as to think it not lawful for himſelf to heal, or for his Diſciples to pluck ears of corn; and he was therefore cenſured and condemned of the *Jews*. And thus it fares in part with others alſo who are his followers, and ſo it frequently hath done in the beſt times of Chriſtianity. Many men have had ſuch a zeal for their own errors, that if others live the moſt holy and *angelical lives*, in conſcientious obedience to the moral laws of God, and in a pious reverence to all the Chriſtian inſtitutions, and precepts of our Saviour, they will not acknowledge theſe to be *good men*, or ſuch as have any true care of Religion or *piety*, if they do not join with them in their *miſtaken* notions, and their practices founded upon thoſe miſtakes.

On this account the Catholick Church was defamed, as impure and carnal.

13. On this account the *Catholick Church*, and the true members thereof, have oft-times fallen under unjuſt cenſures. When the abetters of the *Novatian Schiſm*, declared againſt ſecond Marriages, and the admitting thoſe to repentance in the Church, who were lapſed after Baptiſm, they ſo far judged the Catholick Church *impure*, for practiſing contrary to their errors, that avoiding its communion, they gave themſelves the name of the *Cathari*, or the perſons who were *pure*. And that themſelves were the authors of this name, whereby they were afterwards known, and that they called themſelves thereby, in a way of diſtinction from the *Catholick Chriſtians*; hath not only been declared by *Dionyſius*, *Alexandrinus*, and *Theophilus Alexandrinus*, and other private Authors; but it is alſo affirmed by the (*q*) two firſt *general Councils*. And after *Tertullian* declined to *Montaniſm*; though that Sect impiouſly owned *Montanus* to be the Paraclete, and this Author of them was guilty of very great *impurities* of converſation; he defamed the Catholick Church, and its members, as being (*r*) *carnal*, becauſe it allowed of ſecond Marriages, and did not prolong its Faſts, and ſtationary abſtinence to ſuch late hours of the day, as the Diſciples of *Montanus* did. And the *Donatiſts* in the vehemency of their Schiſm, upon the like

(*q*) Conc. Nic. c. 8. Conc. Conſt. c. 7.

(*r*) Tert. de Monogam & adv. Pſychicos.

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pretence of greater strictness and rigidness, towards them who had offended, ran to that height of censure, against those pious Bishops and Christians, who kept communion with the Church, as to call them (*s*) *Pagans*. And the like might be noted concerning others.

(*s*) Baron. An. 348. n. 38.

Zeal when well guided, very useful; but partial or misplaced, hurtful.

14. Zeal and the greatest *strictness* of life and conversation, when it is well ordered and directed, is of excellent use; but a pretending hereto is really hurtful, when it acts by a mistaken rule. It was the miscarriage of the *Pharisees*, that they were earnest and strict about their *Corban*, but loose and negligent concerning the fifth Commandment; and shewed a great respect to the Sabbath, but gave not due allowance to works of mercy and charity. Let every man be as conscientious and strict as he can be, in entertaining all needful *truth*, in practising all the great *duties* of Religion, and avoiding all evil. But let not zeal be spent about such lesser things, as are in truth of no concernment in Religion; nor let any make such measures the *standard*, to judge of the piety, either of themselves or others, for then they must miscarry. This is to act like a man who hath some mistaken fancies of the best road, and will allow none to be skilful travellers, but them who wander with him out of the right way. The *Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*, Rom. 14. 17. It is not concerned so much about such lesser things, of which many men are fond; as about practising all righteousness, minding the wayes of peace and unity, and being greatly delighted in the exercises and rewards of the Christian hope and obedience.

15. But that I may prevent the misapprehending what I mentioned, concerning some of the *Jewish* errors, above mentioned, I shall here add by way of caution, that though they were too nice, and vainly strict concerning their Sabbath; it is a fault amongst us much to be *lamented*, and needful to be amended, that very many in our age are too *loose*, in neglecting a due reverence for the time of Worship, and the Worship of God it self, as I shall hereafter

ter further note. And they who neglect the *worſhip of God*, whatever party they are of, cannot approve themſelves the faithful Servants of God.

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16. *Secondly*, Our Holy Saviour was accuſed, of *complying with the Devil*, and carrying on his work, and corrupting Religion. The Devil is ſo bad, that whatſoever proceeds from him, and whoſoever join themſelves to him to ſerve him, are deſervedly hateful. Now our Saviour was manifeſted to *deſtroy the works of the Devil*, and he actually overthrew his Kingdom. He caſt out Devils, and diſpoſſeſſed them of that *outward dominion*, they had over the bodies of many men; and he ſo vanquiſhed the evil Spirit, and that Idolatry, ſin, and wickedneſs, which he ſet forward in the world, that he gained the victory over the Devil, with reſpect to that *inward dominion*, whereby he had governed the hearts and lives of the children of diſobedience. He alſo ſilenced his *oracles*, whereby he had obtained a great veneration among the *Gentiles*. And ſo admirably did our Lord prevail, againſt all the power of Satan, that even *Porphyry*, an Apoſtate from Chriſtianity, and Patron of *Gentiliſm* confeſſeth, that from the time that *Jeſus was honoured in the world*, the *Gentile* Gods (who were no other than evil Spirits) loſt their power. As (*t*) *Euſebius* relates, theſe are his very words, even in that Book which he wrote againſt Chriſtianity, Ἰησοῦ πρωμένου ὀλεμιᾶς τις τῶν δημοσίας ὠφελείας ἤσθετο, *after Jeſus was worſhipped, none had any ſence of the manifeſt help of the* (Pagan) *gods.*

2. *The worthieſt perſons have been oft charged with promoting the Devils work, and depraving Religion.*

(*t*) Euſeb. Pr. Evang. l. 5. c. 1.

17. And yet notwithſtanding all this, ſo *unreaſonably ſpiteful* were the reviling tongues of his adverſaries, that againſt all the evidence in the world, he was charged with acting from the Devil, and promoting his intereſt. And when he caſt out Devils, they would not allow this to be otherwiſe done, than by *Beelzebub the Prince of the Devils*. Nor was this wicked and blaſphemous ſlander, only ſome raſh, ſudden unadviſed words, of ſome inconſiderable per-

The Holy Jeſus deſamed as acting by Beelzebub,

 ſons;

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sons; but the *Pharisees*, saith S. *Matthew*, *Mat.* 9. 34. and the *Scribes*, saith S. *Mark*, *Mar.* 3. 22. passed this censure upon him; and what was thus spoken at one time, was repeated and declared again at another, *Mat.* 12. 24. And we may discern by this instance, how easily the greatest calumnies may be *propagated*, by a zealous and eager party, from one *age* to another, and from one *place* to another. For the *Jews* in after ages, still embraced for truth this impudent falshood, which is taken into their (*u*) *Talmud*, which contains a collection of the main body of their Traditions and Opinions. And this wicked and contumelious aspersion of our Lord, though contrary to the highest evidence, was also endeavoured to be spread abroad among the *Pagan Gentiles*, insomuch that (*w*) divers Christian Writers thought fit to refell the same; and to shew the manifest contradiction, which this carried to the piety of our Saviours Religion, to the nature of his precepts, to the works which he did, and to the Spirit and practice of his followers, all which include a manifest opposition to the evil one.

(*u*) v. Hor. Hebr. in Mat. 12. 24.

(*w*) Orig. cont. Cels. l. 1. Eus. Dem. Ev. l. 3. c. 6.

and being a Samaritan:

18. At other times they charged him with being a *Samaritan and having a Devil*, Joh. 8. 48. The name of *Samaritan* was fixed on him, to promote a popular hatred. The *Samaritans* rejected the true worship of God at *Jerusalem*, and depraved and corrupted Religion, and oft manifested a great hatred towards the *Jews*. They frequented Mount (*x*) *Gerazim* as the place of their Worship, in opposition to *Jerusalem*: and their despising the true Worship of God at *Jerusalem*, is observed in the (*y*) *Talmud*, and sufficiently in the holy Scripture it self. And for the countenancing their depraved worship, the *Samaritan version* of the *Pentateuch*, as it is now extant, hath corrupted the law, and hath put in the word *Gerazim*, in the place of *Ebal*, where God commanded an Altar to be made, and Sacrifice to be offered, *Deut.* 27. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. Now the name of a *Samaritan* being odious to the *Jews*, they call our Saviour a *Samaritan*, not as if they thought he was so by his birth,

(*x*) Joseph. Ant. l. 13. c. 6.

(*y*) Hor. Heb. in Joh. 4. 20.

birth, for they admitted him to the *Jewiſh* worſhip as a *Jew*, and knew his neareſt relations to be *Jews*: but they would hereby declare, that he had equally *corrupted Religion*, and deſerved to be as much hated, as the *Samaritans* were. And to this purpoſe was he thus aſperſed, though his *cuſtome* was, to attend the *Jewiſh* Synagogues, *Luk.* 4. 16. and he carefully ſerved God according to the precepts of his Law. But as if this foul calumny was not ſufficient, they further added, that *he had a Devil*, or that he in whom alone the Godhead dwelt bodily, was poſſeſſed by the evil one. And this wicked ſlander was intended, to raiſe the higheſt *prejudice* of the people againſt him, and to keep them far enough from being directed by him. And therefore they ſaid, *Joh.* 10. 20. *he hath a Devil, and is mad, why hear ye him?*

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19. And it may be obſerved, how the carriage of many men among us towards his Miniſters, the *Biſhops and Clergy of the Church of England*, doth too nearly reſemble this behaviour, which I have mentioned of the *Jews*, towards our Lord himſelf. Certainly one of the great works, the Devil contrives to uphold in this laſt Age of the World, is the groſs corruption of *Popery*. Our Clergy and Biſhops, were very inſtrumental in the Reformation, and caſting out of Popery: thoſe of our Church Preach and Write againſt Popery, ſo as to make the cleareſt diſcovery of the falſeneſs of their *doctrine*, and the ſin of their *practices*. Theſe have confuted and baffled them the moſt effectually, and with moſt convictive evidence. Theſe have plainly laid open in the face of the world, the folly, evil and miſchief, of many conſiderable things, aſſerted, and maintained by the *Church of Rome*, and have thereby raiſed the indignation of the *Romaniſts* themſelves, who look upon theſe men to be their moſt *formidable adverſaries*: and they are indeed the great bulwark againſt Popery. And yet becauſe theſe men are not ſo weak and raſh, as to run beyond the bounds of truth, and ſobriety, into other unreaſonable errors, they muſt needs be clamoured on, as *friends to Popery*. And o-

And in like manner our Reformation, Biſhops, and Miniſtry have been aſperſed with Popery,

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by many who are indeed eager against it:

ther men who talk indeed against Popery with great noise, and are real and earnest in what they say, and some few of them have done useful service herein; but most of them speak with much weakness, and many mistakes; whereby they give great advantage to their adversaries; these must be accounted the chief and main *enemies to Popery*, when for the generality of them, the *Romanists* themselves have no great fear of the Writings and Arguments of such opposers. And from these our excellent Reformation meets with virulent censures.

as many Jews were against the Devil.

20. I doubt not, but among the *Jews* in our Saviours time, there were many besides him, and his Disciples, who talked much against the *Devil*, and did indeed *hate* him, though in many things through their misguided zeal, they greatly served his interest. And that the *Jews* had some among them, who sometimes cast out Devils, is not to be doubted, from what we read in the Scripture of the *Jewish Exorcists*, and of our Saviours appeal to the *Pharisees*, Mat. 12. 27. *By whom do your children cast them out?* (z) *Josephus* takes some notice of their Exorcisms; but what he writes is of such a nature, concerning the driving away Devils by some Herbs and *charms*, that they who pretended to act against the evil one by these methods, did seem rather to comply with him. But that some of the *Jews*, both before and after the coming of our Lord, did *cast out evil Spirits*, by the power and in the name of the *God of Abraham*, and the God of *Israel*, is asserted and acknowledged, by (a) *Justin Martyr*, *Irenæus*, and other ancient Christian Writers. But their undertaking was far from being sufficient, to the overthrow of the Kingdom of Satan, nor were they always successful and effectual in lesser cases. When the Sons of *Sceva a Jew, and chief of the Priests*, undertook to cast out a Devil, the evil Spirit prevailed against them, and they were not able to stand before him. But it was he whom the *Jews* aspersed, as complying with the Devil, who did abundantly more against, him than they all were able to do; and he *spoiled principalities and powers.*

(z) Antiq. l. 8. c. 2. & de bel. l. 7. c. 25.

(a) Justin. adv Tryph. Iren. adv. Hæres. l. 2. c. 5.

21. And

21. And beſides all this, though the ſingular and *ſinleſs purity* of his life was admirable, the cenſorious lips of his oppoſers, will even upon this be ſpitting out Adders poyſon, as if his religion and life, had not advanced, but debauched the practice of *vertue and morality*. It is indeed obſerved by (*b*) *Origen*, that even thoſe who falſly accuſed him of many things, never charged him with any *uncleanneſs* of life; and that though *Celſus*, and ſome others, would in general ſpeak againſt the life of Chriſt, (*c*) they gave not inſtance of any particular things, which they could blame in him. But the *Jews* were ſo audacious, that though they could not convince him of any ſin; yet by reaſon of his free, but innocent converſe, they condemn him, *Mat.* 11. 19. as a man *gluttonous, and a wine-bibber*, and as one who gave encouragement to viciouſneſs and ſin, being a *friend of publicans and ſinners*.

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Our Lord was accuſed of encouraging looſeneſs of life:

(*b*) Cont. Celſ. l. 3. p. 132.

(*c*) Ibid. l. 7. p. 369.

22. Now the managing ſuch opprobrious calumnies as theſe, is not only an unreaſonable thing; but is *wicked and ſinful*, and is mighty miſchievous and of very ill conſequence to the world, and much ſerves the ends of the evil one, by alienating the affections of men, from them who are their beſt and ſureſt guides in Religion. I could not but pity the *deluſions* of ſuch a man, who ſhould be perſwaded, that they who would give him the moſt wholeſom diet, intend to *poyſon* him; and therefore he refuſeth that, and feedeth on ſuch things as are leſs wholſom, and oft on traſh, and what is noxious and hurtful. And he is ſtrangely impoſed upon, who is made to believe that thoſe who are his wiſeſt and *faithfulleſt friends*, and really give him the beſt advice and counſel, in his affairs and concerns in the world, are perſons who deſign to *cheat* him, and to make their own advantages of him; and therefore he caſts them off, and betakes himſelf to the direction and guidance of others to his real prejudice. But yet the damage that men may by ſuch means ſuſtain, as to their bodily health, or the intereſt of their eſtate, is not of ſo much weight and moment, as thoſe things are which concern them with reſpect to their ſouls and conſciences.

Such falſe aſperſions of pernicious conſequence to mankind.

23. *Thirdly*,

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3. The most serviceable men have oft been esteemed enemies to publick welfare.

23. *Thirdly*, Our Saviour himself (as other innocent persons also) was charged with acting against the *common good*, and the general *interest of the Nation*; as if he had had so little respect to the welfare of the *Jews*, as to intend nothing but ill towards them. And therefore many of the people in his life time, *Joh.* 7. 12. and the chief Priests and *Pharisees* after his death, *Mat.* 27. 63. accounted him a *deceiver*. And they spake of him, as if they could have no due care of themselves, and their own *publick welfare*, if they did not set themselves against him. And therefore as a publick enemy, he must die that the whole Nation perish not. Hence *Joh.* 11. 48. *If we let this man alone, the Romans shall come, and will take away both our place and Nation.* And these words were the determination of the whole Council of the chief Priests and *Pharisees* which were gathered together, *v.* 47.

24. And there might be some appearance of pretence, for their fear of this danger, from those *known notions* which commonly prevailed among the carnal *Jews*, concerning the *time of their Messias*. For they generally expected, and promised themselves at his coming, the enjoyment of great *delights*, and pleasures in their own land, with a fulness of outward prosperity; and that he should be a mighty *temporal Prince*, and all their enemies even the greatest, should be overcome by him; and should submit themselves to them, and serve them. And of these apprehensions and expectations of theirs, which are intimated in the Scripture, a sufficient account hath been given out of the *Jewish* Writers by (*d*) learned men. And it is not improbable that hereupon the High Priests and *Pharisees* might suspect, that the *Romans*, hearing there was now one in *Judea*, whom many of them owned to be (what he really was) the *true Messias*, and whom divers of the people were forward to make their *King*, and who himself declared the *Kingdom of God* to be now nigh at hand; that the *Romans*, I say, might hereupon fear a defection, and *rebellion* of the *Jewish*

(*d*) Schickard. de Jur. Reg. Heb. c. 6. Th. 20. & Carpzov. ibid. p. 454, &c. Buxt. Syn. Jud. c. 36. Lex. Rab in אדם.

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Jewiſh Nation againſt their Government, and therefore might forcibly come upon them and deſtroy them, unleſs they by oppoſing and deſtroying him, gave publick teſtimony of their fidelity to the *Roman* power. But all this was their *fond miſtake*; for his Kingdom was not of this World; he did nothing to injure their *ſafety*, or to oppoſe the *Roman power*, nor did they truly conſult their own good, when they ſet themſelves againſt him.

25. That which is really the *common good*, and the true intereſt and welfare of a People or Kingdom, is a thing of very great concernment, and ſo very deſirable, that where this publick temporal good can be had without a greater loſs, he who advanceth it is a perſon who deſerves to be *honoured* and renowned; but he is a *common enemy to mankind*, who acts againſt it. To promote a common ruine and *deſtruction*, is a thing ſo inhuman, that the (*e*) *Roman* Orator judged him, who could be pleaſed and ſatisfied therewith, to have degenerated from his nature, and to be bereſt of *humanity*, and that he did not deſerve to be reckoned among mankind. *Quem diſcordiæ*, (ſaith he) *quem cædes civium, quem bellum civile delectat, eum ex numero hominum ejiciendum, ex finibus humanæ naturæ exterminandum puto.* But yet this was much more contrary to the deſign of our Saviour, who came not to deſtroy mens lives but to ſave them; and to the principles, practice and nature of Chriſtianity, which obligeth all not only to be *harmleſs* and innocent, yea, and to be *meek* and peaceable; but alſo to undertake actions of *kindneſs*, and charity, and doing good to all. And it may as ſoon be expected, that an innocent Sheep ſhould act the part of a wild Beaſt, in ſavageneſs and fury, and that the Dove ſhould become a Bird of prey, as that he who is truly a good man, ſhould be (however he may be repreſented) a contriver of *publick hurt*, evil and miſchief. Whoſoever acts any thing, which is againſt the publick intereſt and welfare, if he underſtand the tendency of his own actions, muſt be a perſon of no goodneſs; but if he underſtand it not, he muſt be a perſon of great imprudence, being deceived

(*e*) Cicer. Philip. 3.

Really to promote the common good, is a great part of goodneſs, and doing good;

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deceived and impoſed on, in a buſineſs of ſo weighty a nature, which a common underſtanding would eaſily diſcern.

but an outward pretence of common good, will ſuit ill deſigns.

26. Yet where there is only a bare *pretence* and noiſe, about the common good, without the reall thing, this is oft a *popular artifice* to raiſe a clamour and odium, againſt ſuch perſons, towards whom the contrivers of this pretence have diſreſpect. And thus it hath happened in very many caſes. This was the method and artifice, that *Corah* made uſe of againſt *Moſes*, who charged him with having already done much hurt and miſchief to *Iſrael*, and being far from doing them that good he pretended; and that he intended to *tyrannize* and lord it over them, thereby to exalt himſelf; and that this was ſo evident a thing, their *eyes muſt be put out* if they did not ſee it, *Numb.* 16. 13, 14. Now nothing could be more unreaſonable, than to imagine ſuch things as theſe, to be true concerning *Moſes*, who had brought them out of *bondage*, under whoſe conduct they had paſſed through the *red Sea*, had received the law ſpoken by a voice from Heaven on Mount *Sinai*, and written by God himſelf on the two tables of Stone, and were conſtantly fed with Manna from Heaven in the Wilderneſs. And yet this ſtrange accuſation being a *popular thing*, and ſeeming to eſpouſe the intereſt of the whole Congregation, greatly prevailed amongſt them againſt *Moſes*.

The primitive Chriſtians were accounted publick enemies.

27. The like calumny was in the firſt ages of Chriſtianity, charged upon all Chriſtians in general, that they were the cauſe of all the *publick troubles* that befel the World. And though this was ſo exceeding manifeſtly contrary to their Religion, yet becauſe this charge was apt to *provoke the rage* of the people againſt them, it was oft inſiſted upon, and much urged by the enemies of Chriſtianity, for many Ages. When the *Goths* under *Alaricus*, had *ſacked* and waſted *Rome*, the *Pagans* charged the Chriſtian Religion, to be the occaſion of that calamity: whereupon S. *Auſtin* being inflamed with a zeal for God, wrote his Books *de Civitate Dei*, as a defence and vindication of Chriſtianity, from that

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that calumny, as (*f*) himſelf teſtifieth. And to confute the like general ſlander, upon all occaſions prevailing among the *Gentiles*, *Oroſius* wrote his Books of Hiſtory, by the perſwaſion of S. *Auſtin*, deſigning therein eſpecially (*g*) to give an account of the *various calamities* which had befallen the World, in thoſe ages and parts thereof, where Chriſtianity had not prevailed, and been received. And *Tertullian* acquaints us, that in his time, if any thing whatſoever happened in the World, contrary to its general welfare, flouriſhing and *proſperity*, the general cry among the *Pagans* preſently was, (*h*) *Chriſtianos ad leonem*, that the *Chriſtians* ſhould be devoured, by being expoſed to the *Lion*, that thereby the cauſe of common miſeries might be removed by their deſtruction. And (*i*) *Origen* ſpeaks much to the ſame purpoſe.

(*f*) Aug. Retrac. l. 2. de Civ. Dei. l. 1. c. 1.

(*g*) Oroſ. Hiſtor. Præf. ad Aug.

(*h*) Tert. Apol. c. 4.

(*i*) Cont. Celſ. l. 3. p. 120.

28. And ſuch have frequently been the *unaccountable cenſures*, and outcries, againſt the moſt excellent and deſerving perſons, as if they were the enemies to the general welfare of the people, among whom they lived. But nothing could be more unjuſt and *unreaſonable*, than to imagine any ſuch thing as this, in the caſe of our bleſſed Saviour. *If inſtructing* men in the truth, and the right ways of Religion, and the will of God; if promoting *well-doing*, and the practice of piety; if the taking care of the things that *pleaſe God*, and make him their friend; and if the exerciſes of *humility*, meekneſs, peace and love, be the way to ruin and deſtroy a Nation, then might our *Saviour* and his Religion, be the occaſion of the ruin of Kingdoms; and ſo may alſo his Miniſters and the *Clergy* that follow his ſteps. But in truth it was the *Jews oppoſing* him and his Doctrine, which was the cauſe of their ruine. Our Lord with tears and compaſſion foretold their miſery, becauſe they *knew not the time of their viſitation*, Luk. 19. 43, 44. And after they had rejected the counſel of God, and bid defiance to his Anointed, and gratified their *malice*, in Crucifying the Lord of life; that God who according to his eſpecial promiſe, had whilſt they ſerved him, kept their enemies from

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desiring their land at the time when all their Males went up to serve him, *Exod.* 34. 24. which might seem to leave all the other parts of *Judea* destitute of any defence; he now suffered the *Romans* to *invade* them, and shut them up (*) at the time of the *Pass-over* (at which time they Crucified our Lord) and to destroy them. But had they hearkened to our Saviour, they had thereby every way taken care of their *common good*: he would not only have saved their souls from destruction, but also have preserved their City, and would have *gathered Jerusalem, as an hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but they would not*: and *therefore their house was left desolate*, Mat. 23. 37, 38. And in other cases, it is easie to apprehend, how much they act against the true publick interest, who are the fomenters of such *reproaches*, against them who are faithful in the land, as if they were the *chief opposers* of its good. It is obvious to every eye, that if an enemy can prevail so far by his *subtilty* as to persuade a people, that those men who truly are the best and wisest Commanders, are persons who resolve to destroy their Army, and comply with their enemies; and hereupon they are laid aside, upon presumption that it is not safe to trust them; he hath done much of his work, and gone a great way towards the obtaining a *conquest* over them, by first prevailing upon their *indiscretion*, and unjust jealousie and suspicion.

(*) Eus. Hist. Eccl. l. 3. c. 5.

The promoters of this censure, are really enemies to the common good.

29. *Fourthly*, They accused our Saviour, that he was no *friend to Cæsar*, but one who stood up against him. And therefore they told *Pilate*, Joh. 19. 12. *If thou let this man go thou art not Cæsars friend: whosoever maketh himself a King, speaketh against Cæsar.* Now to oppose Government, is a great Crime; and the nature of the Rulers *authority*, and the *commands* of God, require honour, reverence, and obedience to be yielded thereto. Princes and Magistrates are sometimes in Scripture called *Gods*: and that precept of the Law, *Exod*, 22. 28. *Thou shalt not revile the Gods*; is in the Margent of our Translation referred to *rulers* and Judges,

4. The best men are also accused of ill designs against Governours.

Judges, and ſo it is expreſſed in (*k*) many other Tranſlations: nor can it well be underſtood, as ſome would have it, of the *Gentile Deities*, which ought to be deteſted!

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(*k*) Verſ. Syr. Arab. Perſ. ch. paraphr.

30. But though this charge was openly *pleaded*, at his arraignment, it was as notoriouſly falſe, as any of the other things above-mentioned. It was not poſſible that he who was *King of Kings*, and by whom *Kings reign*, ſhould be an enemy to that Authority, which he himſelf upheld; or that he who came into the World, to advance the *honour and dignity of his Father*, ſhould ſet himſelf againſt thoſe Powers, which were his Ordinance, and Eſtabliſhed by him. It could not be ſuppoſed, that a perſon of that ſingular *integrity*, which every where appeared in him, who had ſharply reproved the *Phariſees*, for aſſerting ſuch Doctrines as made void the *fifth Commandment*, ſhould himſelf be guilty, of giving an example of the ſame fault, and in an higher degree. Nor could there be any reaſonable pretence, that he who was ſo great a friend to *all mankind*, whoſe life practiſed, and whoſe openly declared Doctrine enjoined, an univerſal love even to *enemies*; that he ſhould be an enemy to *Cæſar*, who was the *Miniſter of God for the good* of men, and under whoſe Government peace, and *property* and order, was in ſome conſiderable meaſure eſtabliſhed in the World. Upon ſuch conſiderations as theſe, the ancient (*l*) Apologiſts for Chriſtians, under Pagan Emperors, declared it impoſſible, for him who was a *Chriſtian*, to be *an enemy to the Emperour*, when he might not be an enemy to any man upon Earth, and was particularly obliged, to reverence him whom God had conſtituted. And the ſame conſideration will ſhew, that they who are enemies to their *Princes* and Superiours, and are oppoſers of Government, cannot be truly *Chriſtians*.

Nothing is more unreaſonable, than this charge was, againſt our Saviour.

(*l*) Tertul. Apol. c. 28, 29, 30, 31, 32. ad Scap. c. 4.

31. But it is here obſervable, that this accuſation was only a *crafty fetch*, intended wholly to ſerve a preſent turn, that by pleading this, they might poſſeſs *Pilate*, with a *prejudice* againſt him, and make it appear neceſſary that

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On this accusation our Lord was condemned, as an enemy to Cæsar.

he should *condemn* him, or else not shew himself faithful to *Cæsar*, in that Office which was committed to him. And that upon *this accusation*, and for this cause, *Pilate* Sentenced him to be *Crucified*, is evinced from the Title written upon his Cross, *Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews*, which both S. *Matthew*, and S. *Mark* call *his accusation*, Mat. 27. 37. Mar. 16. 26. And that for this thing, he was condemned to die, was noted by S. *Hierome*, (*m*) who yet declares, that he could not sufficiently admire, that when they had *suborned false Witnesses, nullam aliam causam invenirent interfectionis ejus, quam quod rex erat Judæorum, they could find no other cause to put him to death, than his being the King of the Jews.* And for a further confirmation that this was the ground on which he was Crucified, it is observed and sufficiently cleared by (*n*) Dr. *Hammond*, that it was the usual custom of the *Romans*, on this manner, to give a publick signification of the *crime*, for which any man was punished. And it may be noted from S. *John*, that till it was urged, that *Pilate* could not be *Cæsars friend* if he let *Jesus* go; and that *whosoever makes himself a King speaks against Cæsar*, *Pilate* was desirous to have released him, *Joh.* 19. 12. But when he *heard this saying, he sat down in the Judgment-Seat*, and delivered him to be Crucified, *v.* 13, —16.

(*m*) Hier in Mat. 27.

(*n*) Annot. on Mar. 15. b.

32. But yet this accusation was not charged upon him by the *Jews*, out of any true *kindness* they had for *Cæsar*, but only out of *malice* and enmity against the blessed Jesus. The name of *Cæsar*, as was noted by *Tertullian*, (*o*) was more sacred and inviolable amongst the *Romans*, than any of their Gods, and therefore to charge him with opposing *Cæsar*, was the most likely way for them to obtain their end; and therefore when they brought him before *Pilate*, this was the accusation which they then urged against him, *Luk.* 23. 1, 2. But though at this time they pretended themselves *well affected* to *Cæsar*, and concerned for the securing his Authority; yet in truth neither the *Pharisees*, nor the other *Jews*, had any real kindness for him, and were desirous

(*o*) Tert. Apol. c. 28.

This was managed by those who were no friends to Cæsar.

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deſirous if they knew how, to ſhake off his authority. And at this very time, they could ſhew themſelves friends to *Barabbas* who had made *inſurrection* againſt the peace of the Government, and had committed murder in the Inſurrection. And they knew well enough that Jeſus had enjoined men their duty to *Cæſar*.

33. The Governours and *Clergy of our Church*, have in ſome things met with a kind of proceedings, ſomewhat like this. There are perſons, who are not very eminent for *loyalty* themſelves, who know our Clergy to be *faithful Subjects*, and friends to the King, and to teach others the ſame; and yet they will endeavour to charge them, with undermining the Kings Authority, and encroaching upon the Rights and *Royalties of the Crown*. But let ſuch perſons conſider, what ſincerity they uſe in ſuch things as this, and whether beſides the uncharitableneſs, which appears in theſe actings towards others; they do not offer violence to themſelves, and act againſt the inward ſenſe of their own conſciences. Thus were the primitive Chriſtians defamed as if they oppoſed the Majeſty of the Emperor, (*p*) *Circà Majeſtatem Cæſaris infamamur*; though the Chriſtians of that age had never been guilty of any acts of *rebellion*, and neither thought nor ſpake unworthily of their Rulers. And S. *Paul* was called *a peſtilent fellow, and a mover of Sedition*, Act. 24. 5.

The like accuſation againſt other innocent perſons.

(*p*) Tertul. ad Scap. c. 2.

34. And now I have thus far diſcourſed, of the *exorbitant extravagancies* of a reproaching tongue, I here declare, that it is not my deſign in this Chapter, to charge even ſuch men, who are too much overtaken with ſome degree of this ſin, as if they were arrived to that height and *exceſs*, which I have here deſcribed. But the things I aim at are, *Firſt*, To warn all men, againſt giving the reins to uncharitable cenſure and reproach; ſince this evil practice is that, which Satan hath made great uſe of in all the Ages of the World, as the firſt and *chief means*, to oppoſe all the ways of true *piety and goodneſs*. And hereby he hath done great miſchief in the World: the *oppoſitions* which both Chriſt,

Hence we are watchfully to take heed of joining in reproaching others;

Sect. III.

Chriſt, and Chriſtianity, and all good men met with in the world, have proceeded very much from this cauſe; and the violence and *perſecutions* which the primitive Chriſtians underwent, was the conſequent hereupon. And we may hence diſcern alſo, into what ſtrange *exorbitancies* men may be led, though they come not up to the higheſt extravagancy, if they yield their tongues to be governed by their own *paſſions*, or by the *unjuſt clamours* of other men, againſt them who ſhould govern, guide, lead and direct them; ſince our Saviour who was the *moſt excellent guide* that ever the World had, and the moſt *innocent perſon*, was ſo highly defamed, and ſo injuriouſly aſperſed with *unreaſonable calumny*.

and the being influenced by ſuch paſſionate cenſures.

35. *Secondly*, I intend hereby to manifeſt, how much *courage*, ſtedfaſtneſs and conſtancy, is neceſſary for the ſincerely pious man. It may be the portion of any ſuch perſon whomſoever, in his ſpeaking and doing well, to be miſrepreſented, and *expoſed to calumny* and ſlander. Our great Maſter hath foretold, that his ſervants muſt in this particular expect the ſame meaſure, which himſelf received. But let no good man be *diſmayed*, if he be thus treated in the World, but let him be ſtedfaſtly reſolved to purſue his duty, and to be unmoveably upright and conſcientious, whatſoever *reſpect or diſreſpect*, he may meet with among men. Whoever is made more *remiſs in well-doing*, or whoſe ſpirit is royled and diſcompoſed by *undeſerved cenſures*, doth hereby fall into temptation, and the ſnare of the evil one: but he that reſolvedly holds faſt his *integrity*, and runs with patience his *Chriſtian race*, amidſt all theſe oppoſitions, this is the man who rightly diſchargeth the duty of a Chriſtian, and taketh up his Croſs and *followeth his Lord*.

unreaſonable cenſures are to be couragiouſly undergone,

being the pious mans advantage.

36. And it is infinitely better for any man, to fear the cenſure of the greateſt part of the World, in *well-doing*, than to neglect what may pleaſe God, and do good to men; ſince hereby he gains the bleſſing of Chriſt. Our Saviour declared, *Luk.* 6. 22. *Bleſſed are ye, when men ſhall reproach you,*

you, and caſt out your name as evil for the Son of mans ſake. Rejoice ye in that day and leap for joy; for behold your reward is great in Heaven. Wherefore though a clear and good *reputation* and general eſteem, is uſeful and deſirable to a good man, becauſe it gives him many advantages of doing good in his generation, yet if in the faithful and prudent management of his duty, he meeteth with *hard meaſures*, from the uncharitable expreſſions of other men; it may juſtly ſo far as concerns himſelf, rather affect him with *joy than diſturbance.* Yea, with reſpect to theſe words of Chriſt, which I have now mentioned, the Author under (*q*) S. *Hierom*'s name, thinks it a thing *deſirable*, to be reproached and evil ſpoken of, *Quis non maledici deſideret*, (ſaith he) *ut mereatur Chriſti nomine laudari, & cœleſti copioſaq; mercede munerari?* This alſo was a mighty ſatisfaction to S. *Auſtin*, who declared that whilſt he oppoſed the *Donatiſts*, (*r*) he underwent ſharp and *opprobrious reproaches*, from the enemies of the glory of Chriſt, but then reflecting upon the bleſſing, in this caſe pronounced by our Lord, he adds, *Quiſquis volens detrahit famæ meæ, nolens addit mercedi meæ; he that willingly leſſens my reputation, doth unwillingly add to my reward.* But he who is turned aſide from the paths of goodneſs, by the ſlander of men, is guilty of greater raſhneſs and imprudence, than that traveller, who takes a journey of great concernment to his life and eſtate, and yet will ſtop his courſe, or go out of his way, if he diſcerns the wind to blow upon him.

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(*q*) Epiſt. ad Oceanum.

(*r*) Aug. cont. lit. Petil. l. 3. c. 7.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

The manifold ſinfulneſs, *and ſevere* puniſhment *of reproaching and ſpeaking evil, eſpecially againſt* Superiors.

1. HAving ſhewed the *unreaſonable proceedings* of a reviling tongue, and how unruly an evil it is, I ſhall now add ſome further general conſiderations, concerning the *greatneſs of the ſin* of reproaching others, eſpecially our Superiours. And in this Chapter I ſhall ſhew two things, *Firſt*, How many *great ſins* are contained in it: and *Secondly*, What a dreadful *puniſhment* is denounced againſt the practiſers of it. Wherefore,

2. *Firſt*, This is a complicated and *multiplied ſin*, and ſo comprehenſive an evil, that very many great tranſgreſſions are contained and linked together in it. S. *Baſil* ſeems to think, that a reproaching Spirit (*a*) might be the *beginning* of all ſin in the world; which may well be accounted true, if we conſider it with reſpect to God, and include under it that diſpoſition of mind from whence it flows. For the cloſing with that temptation, whereby the Serpent *reproached* the infinitely good God, was that which brought ſin and ruine on mankind. And it may well be thought, that the *original tranſgreſſion* of the fallen Angels, was their having *ill thoughts* of the higheſt good, and thereupon being forward to depart from God, and to draw others from him into the ſame defection. And this is the very root of reproaching, or that *diſpoſition of ſpirit* from whence it ariſeth.

(*a*) Baſ. in Eſai. c. 2.

uncharitable evil-ſpeaking includes very many great ſins.

3. And

3. And this ought to be the more detested, because the exercise of this sin, includes in it many heinous offences. Now though *one single sin*, which any person willingly and wilfully pursues, is sufficient to manifest him void of the fear of God, and estranged from the Christian life; yet where the evil heart can readily choose, and the conscience suffer, *many notorious sins* to prevail, without being either so watchful, as to observe them; or so faithful, as to raise all the powers and faculties of the soul, to oppose them; here is a mind and conscience, so much the more *grosly defiled* and vitiated. His condition is like that of the man into whom the *unclean Spirit entring, taketh with him seven other Spirits*, who enter in, and dwell there. And as that body is in a bad condition, in which divers dangerous diseases are reigning; so that soul cannot be in any safe condition, where many great sins do rule and govern it. And it is considerable in this case, that a defaming temper, and the neglect of forsaking it by repentance, alwaies include a *voluntary choice*, and therefore hath in it, as all other sins of choice have, a want of reverence to God and his laws. And besides this,

4. *First*, It contains under it an opposition to, and neglect of the great command of *love*. It was our Saviours Doctrine, that among all the precepts given by God in the Old Testament, that of *loving God with all the heart, was the first, and the other of loving our Neighbour, the second which is like unto it*. And the wisest men among the *Jews*, have owned and acknowledged the same truth. (*b*) *Philo* speaking of the *love of men*, esteemeth it so nearly allyed unto *Religion towards God*, that he calls it its *Sister and Twin*. And it can be no small sin to live in the breach of so great a Commandment. This duty is so particularly pressed, and inculcated by Christ, on all his Disciples, and so great Motives are superadded to the force this Commandment had before, that it appears under the Gospel as a *new Commandment*, which every Christian must obey,

1. *It is inconsistent with Christian love,*

(*b*) Phil. de Charitate; ἐυσεβείας ἀδελφὴ καὶ δίδυμον φιλανθρωπίαν.

following the example of our Lord. But to reproach others is to act contrary to love; for this intends *hurt*, and to lessen the esteem of others, and cast some blemish upon them, and the defamer *pleaseth himself*, for the present, in so doing. But *charity thinks no evil*, 1 Cor. 13. 5. and he who truly loves any man, and is his real friend, cannot hear him unjustly evil spoken of, with any delight and satisfaction, but is troubled at it, and is so averse from joining in the same himself, that so far as he fairly and honestly can, he will *vindicate* his reputation, and plead his cause. Yea, charity will act with that seriousness, on the behalf of a friend, that as (c) *Maximus Tyrius* observes, it will even work through places *not passable*, and easily overcome things that are *dreadful*.

(c) Max. Tyr. Diss. 10. τὰ ἄπορα αὐτῷ διαπορώτατα, καὶ τὰ δεινὰ ἀμαχώτατα. *especially, when it respects the Ministers of God, in Church or State.*

5. But when censures and calumnies are raised, against the *Ministers* and *Governours* of the Church, there are two other ways, whereby they greatly offend against the duty of love; the one with respect to the *love of God*, in promoting his honour; and the other with regard to the *love of men*, unto whom these reproaches are published. For these things tending to lessen their reputation, are so far as they take place, like to hinder the *success* of their labours, and of their Ministerial Office. And the offender who commits this sin considerately and advisedly, so as to discern the large consequents of it, must be one who for the gratifying his *passion*, is willing to become instrumental, that the work of God and the happiness of man, both which are committed to the care of the Ministry, should not *prosper*, and have their desired effect. And this great good is really hindred by this sinful practice, whether man will consider it or no. And there is much of the like evil in defaming or speaking reflectively against our *Secular Governours*, since they also are the *Ministers of God to man for good*.

6. *Secondly*, The reproaching Superiours is a breach of the *fifth Commandment*. For therein honour and reverent respect

respect is commanded to *all Superiours*; and this is necessary for the upholding their just Authority. But to reproach, is not to honour, but to *dishonour* and vilifie them. And though our *natural Parents* be the neareſt to us, on whom we have a more particular dependance, and from whom we have a more especial care: yet *Governours and Rulers* are chiefly to be honoured, because they are set by God in an higher station, and have a larger portion of his Authority committed to them, and as Gods Ministers, are appointed for a more *comprehensive benefit*, and extensive good to mankind, and are *common Parents*, to govern and take care of those, who are under them in civil Societies. Hence (*d*) *Philo* not amiss observed, that the *fifth Commandment* being placed, as between the duties to God and man, had great respect to both; and that he who breaks this Commandment, will be condemned at both these two *tribunals*, that of *God* and that of *man*: ἀσεβείας μὲν ἐν τῷ θείῳ, μισανθρωπίας δὲ ἐν τῷ κατ' ἀνθρώπους, of *irreligion towards God in the Divine Tribunal, and of enmity towards men in the humane*. And though this may be truly said of almost all other transgressions, yet it appears more eminenly, in the breach of this Commandment. And it adds to the force of this precept, that the Doctrine of Christianity doth mightily inforce it, and strictly require us to *honour the King*, and all who are over us either in the Church or State.

2. *It is a great breach of the fifth Commandment, to speak evil of Rulers,*

(*d*) Phil. de Decalog. p. 76.

7. And it is worthy of our serious consideration, that the Apostle for the inforcing obedience to this *fifth precept of the Decalogue*, gives it this Character, *Ephes.* 6. 2. that it is *the first Commandment with promise*; or it is a great and *chief command*, unto which God annexed a *special and signal promise*. And thus much I think the Apostle to intend by these words. When our Saviour declared, which was the *first Commandment* of the law, *Mar.* 12. 28, 29, 30. the phrase *first*, doth not there refer to order, but to excellency; as is manifest from *v.* 31, and *v.* 33. and therefore the question which in S. *Mark* is expressed, *which is the first Commandment?* is in S. *Matthew*, *which is the great Com-*

which is a special Commandment with promise.

mandment? Now the *fifth Commandment* is therefore manifeſted to be a great, and very conſiderable Commandment, becauſe to that alone, of all the precepts of the Decalogue, God was pleaſed to affix a *peculiar* and excellent promiſe. For that declaration of Gods kindneſs, in the end of the *ſecond Commandment*, that he *ſhews mercy unto thouſands of them that love him, and keep his Commandments*, is truly obſerved by (e) *Eraſmus* and *Grotius*, not to have a peculiar reſpect to that precept alone, but to have a general regard to them all; as the words in that precept do evidently manifeſt. But to this *fifth Commandment* this excellent promiſe is adjoined, *that it may be well with thee, and that thou maiſt live long on the Earth*, which ſhews that our own intereſt is highly concerned in this caſe.

(e) In Annot. in Eph. 6. 2.

8. Wherefore the obſerving the duties of this precept, is the way which God himſelf hath *directed* men, for the obtaining his *bleſſings*, and the continuance of them in this world, and this the Apoſtle declares and urgeth, with reſpect to the time of Chriſtianity. And the neglect of the duties of this command, ſo far as concerns the terms of Gods promiſe, is a *forfeiture* of that right and title we might have to all the advantages of this life, and the bleſſing of God for our comfort and well-being here upon Earth. And theſe *earthly bleſſings* when the law was given, were ſo propoſed in this *fifth Commandment* of the Decalogue, as to have ſome *typical reſpect* alſo to the bleſſings of the *life to come*. Now though God of his bounty and patience, doth many times beſtow long life, and therewith many other enjoyments of this world, upon them who have no *right* to them, by the terms of his *Covenant and promiſe*; yet they want that *aſſurance* of theſe things, and eſpecially that favourable *kindneſs* and particular care of God to go along with them, which the pious man enjoys, and which is far more valuable and excellent, than the poſſeſſion of any outward good is. Wherefore the careful and conſcientious practice of *reverence and honour* towards Superiour relations, however ſome men may account of it, is no light thing,

This is a forfeiture of the right to Gods bleſſings in the world.

thing, it being that upon which our *title* to the blessings of God so much depends.

9. *Thirdly*, All reproachful Calumnies especially against Superiours, are a violation of the *sixth Commandment*, *Thou shalt not kill.* For the performing the duty which relates to this precept, according to the extent which the Doctrine of our Saviour gives it, requires an innocent, calm and meek temper and behaviour, towards all men, so as not to admit any *causless anger*, nor any passionate and *contumelious expressions*, Mat 5.21,22. But to all this, this sin is directly opposite. And besides this, we may further discover, how much this command is transgressed by rash censures and calumnies, if we either consider the *effects* they produce, or the *cause* from whence they proceed.

3. This is a breach of the sixth Commandment.

10. The *effects* of reproach, are frequently of different kinds. If we reflect upon the more *immediate result* thereof; the Sword of the tongue oft wounds deep, and keen words *pierce* even to the inward part of man, and his very heart. The sence of which made (*f*) *Nazianzen* perswade them who reproach others, to lay down *their arms*; their *slings and spears*, even their *tongues*, by which they do mischief to one another and are applauded, and these are more ready at hand than other weapons. And there is indeed so much of *cruelty*, and real hurt in calumny and reproach, that our Saviour accounts this a way of *persecution*, and observes, that thereby the Prophets were *persecuted for righteousness* sake, *Mat.* 5.10,11,12.

Calumny is cruel.

(*f*) Naz. Ep. 191.

11. But when evil speaking is directed against *Governours*, it too often becomes the parent of *violence*, cruelty and inhumanity, by giving birth to *tumults* and Seditions. They who reflect upon the last Age, may discern, how by this method we became engaged, in such a bloody *Civil War*, as cut off and destroyed many thousands of men. Thus as S. *James* observes, Chap. 3. 6. *The tongue defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature.* It puts mens *heads and hearts* upon contriving and acting fierce and

Contumelious expressions against Governours, oft beget tumults and blood-shed.

and furious enterpriſes; it makes their *hands* forward, and their *feet ſwift* to ſhed blood; and if not timely prevented, it kindleth thoſe heats, which bring all things into a flame. And I heartily wiſh it were an hard and difficult task, to find out inſtances to verifie the complaints of *Lipſius* concerning calumny. He declares (*g*) that it *divides* intimate friends, and ſets them at diſtance: Are any *grieved* to ſee feuds and diſcords and weapons of death, ſtick faſt in the *bowels of the Common-wealth*? *it is calumny* darted them thither, and fixed them there. Do any reflect with *ſadneſs*, upon the *flames of Civil Wars*, continuing to burn for ſo many years? *it is calumny that kindled them.* And, as he goes on, this is that which ſets *Princes and people* at diſtance from each other, and engageth one man againſt another. And indeed almoſt all the *tumults*, Seditions, and Rebellions which have been ſo *deſtructive* and pernicious to the World, have had their original from hence.

(*g*) Lipſius in Orat. de Calumnia. Doletis hærere in Reip. viſceribus diſcordiarum tela? calumnia injecit: ardere tot annos facem bellorum civilium? calumnia accendit, &c.

How he that hates his Brother, is a murderer.

12. And if we reflect on the *cauſe* from whence evil-ſpeaking and reproaching doth ariſe; this is a *want of love*, as I above noted, and a prevalency of *ill will* and hatred. But S. *John* aſſures us, 1 *Joh.* 3. 15. *he that hateth his Brother is a murderer.* And in truth, though there may be ſeveral reaſons which may reſtrain him from any ſuch acts of violence, as to *commit murder*, yet he harbours much of the ſame inward temper with an *open murderer*. For he that hates his Brother, ſo far as concerns his Brother himſelf, and unleſs he thinks he may make uſe of him to ſerve ſome other ends, wiſheth him out of the way; and would chuſe, and be pleaſed to have him *out of the world*. And this is that very ſame wicked temper of mind which *ſpirits a murderer*. Wherefore this ſin which ſo *defiles* the heart, and *ſtains* the World with *blood*, is a ſin of a ſcarlet dye.

13. *Fourthly*, This ſin offends againſt thoſe precepts, which forbid bearing *falſe witneſs*, ſlandering and ſpeaking evil; all which enjoin the *right government of the tongue*, in what it ſpeaks of others. (*h*) *Philo* obſerves, that under the

(*b*) Phil. de Decal. p. 768.

the *ninth Commandment* is included τὸ μὴ συκοφαντεῖν, not to *calumniate* or defame; which is to be extended not only to matters of *publick justice*, but even to rules of *private conversation*. But a reproachful tongue both offends against charity, and is generally further guilty, of not making conscience, to keep to the strict rules of *truth*. And as *Tertullian* speaks, in refelling the slanders, spread abroad among the *Pagans*, against the *Christians*, report and fame thus raised and divulged, is (*i*) *plurimùm mendax, quæ nè tunc quidem quando aliquid veri affert, sine mendacii vitio est, detrahens, adjiciens, demutans de veritate: for the most part false, and is not even then, when it contains somewhat of truth, free from the fault of lying, taking something from, or adding to, or making some alteration concerning the truth.* And this sin of *lying* deserves to be accounted the more *hateful* and evil, and to be abhorred as abominable, because it is part of the character of the wicked one, that he is a *lyar from the beginning, and a deceiver*: whereas it is one of the excellent titles of our Saviour, that he is the *faithful witness*; and also he is the *Amen*, and the *truth*. And this sin hath much of the Diabolical nature and practice in it; the evil one doing much mischief by false suggestions.

4. *It ordinarily transgresseth the bounds of truth.*

(*i*) Tertul. Apol. c. 7.

14. *Fifthly*, Reproaching others is a great violation of *Justice*. He that speaketh evil of *dignities*, is ranked among the *unjust* by S. *Peter*, 2 Pet. 2. 9, 10. And calumny in general is very injurious both to the *person reproached*, and to those also to whom such reproaches are uttered. To wrong a man in his reputation and *good name*, is an injury in several respects much worse, than the wronging him in his goods and *possessions*, and hath been so esteemed amongst men. Partly on this account, it was, the (*k*) general determination of the *Jewish Rabbins*, that though actions of trespass, or violence against the *estates* of men, might be heard and punished by their lesser consistory of *three*; yet matters of slander and *defamation* came not under their cognisance,

5. *It offendeth against justice.*

(*k*) Sanh. c. 3. n. 1.

niſance, but were to be determined by a greater Conſiſtory of *twenty three*; being things of an higher nature, which required a more weighty conſideration, and ſometimes a *capital puniſhment*.

15. For a mans reputation hath a more immediate reſpect to his *perſon*, and the true *worth* of the man, than his poſſeſſions have; and to have his good name impaired deprives him of a great part of that ſatisfaction and comfort, which he might enjoy, from *ſociety* and converſe in the world. And he who is injured in his Eſtate, may have his loſs repaired, and his damage recompenced, by having as much *reſtored* to him again, from the perſon who wronged him. But the ſlanderer, and reproacher, is not capable of making the like *reparation*, nor hath he ſufficiently wiped off the aſperſion he caſt upon another, though he ſhould *recall* it, and acknowledge his *fault*. For the words of *defamation* which he uttered, may be ſo ſpread abroad, as to come to the ears of many, who may never hear of his having *retracted* them: and many others through their own uncharitableneſs, may give credit to the former, rather than the latter. A reproach is herein like the running in of the Sea water, where the bank is broken, it is apt to overflow every way, and is not eaſily carried off again; and when it is ſo, it uſually leaves a *briniſh ſaltneſs* behind it. It (*l*) flies about *quickly*, and yet it *wounds ſharply*: and though the ſound of words at the greater diſtance, grows leſs and leſs; the noiſe of fame and reproach the farther it goes, the more it frequently increaſeth, and becomes the louder, according to the words of the Poet, (*m*) *Fama malum, quo non aliud velocius ullum, Mobilitate viget, viresque acquirit eundo.* And this tends to make the life of the perſon who bears the reproach, the more troubleſom and *uneaſie* in the world.

This injury to the perſon reproached, cannot eaſily be repaired;

(*l*) Bern. leviter volat, ſed graviter vulnerat.

(*m*) Virgil.

16. Indeed the Chriſtian temper, and the grace of God, doth *wonderfully ſupport*, and uphold the pious man, and enableth him to bear up above theſe difficulties, and worketh in him a more than *manly courage*, whereby he is able with

with S. *Paul*, to take *pleasure in reproaches*. But this doth no more lessen the sin of the reviler, than a Christian's knowing, how to rejoice in other *persecutions* for Christs sake, doth lessen the sin of those persecutors, whose actions have a direct tendency to work his trouble and calamity. He who endeavoureth another mans mischief, by poysoning him, is not the less criminal in *foro Dei*, if the other be sufficiently antidoted against it.

17. And this practice is injurious to them, to whom the *reproach is uttered*, especially if it be *pleasing* to them. For then it many times *envenomes* their spirits, inflames their passions, brings them into the *snare* of the Devil, and tends to engage them in all those sins, which the person who is guilty of reproaching, is chargeable with. And hereby they become deprived of that *delightful sweetness*, and pleasantness of mind, and of the blessing of God, which accompanieth the *meek and charitable man*. And this is the doing them a far *greater injury*, than if their bodies should be infected with noysom Diseases: both because the evil of *sin*, is of far worse consequence, than sickness; and seizeth on and defileth the nobler part of man: and also because in such distempers of the body, he who undergoes them, is ordinarily *sensible* of the evil, and danger of them, and complains of them, and seeks for help and cure; while the mind tainted with this sinful temper, is not for the most part so much as inclined to have it removed, but is too much *pleased*, with the increase thereof. (*n*) S. *Bernard* observed, what a *lamentable massacre* may by this means be perpetrated, upon the souls of men, even in a moment; *Unus qui loquitur, uno in momento, multitudinis audientium dum aures inficit, animas interficit: One man thus speaking, whilst he infects the ears of a multitude of auditors, doth forthwith destroy the souls*, by extinguishing charity.

and it greatly wrongs the souls of those who hear it with delight.

(*n*) Bernard. sup. Cant. Serm. 24.

18. *Sixthly*, This sin of reproaching, greatly opposeth the practice, and duty of *peace*, which is so frequently and earnestly enjoined, as one of the chief duties of our Religi-

6. It opposeth peace.

on. It hath been a *frequent complaint*, that the precepts for peace are not duly observed; and it were happy if peace were as much entertained, as it is *commended*. In the early days of Christianity, it was noted, that peace was such (*o*) a good, as was *applauded by all men, but preserved by few*. This all Christians are to pursue *as much as lieth in them*. This is expressed by S. *Paul*, to be one of the chief things required, that we may so *serve Christ as to be acceptable to God, and approved of men*, Rom. 14. 18. and from hence he makes this Inference, *Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace*, v. 19. Among the several expressions the Apostle useth, to declare the *fruits of the Spirit*, the greater number of them tend to this purpose, *Gal.* 5. 22, 23. *Love, peace, long-suffering, gentleness and meekness*. But the unpeaceable and passionate temper takes up a great part of the *works of the flesh*, mentioned *Gal.* 5. 20, 21. whereby we may discern, how much the true Spirit of Christianity is concerned, in performing the duties of peace. But the reproaching and defaming others, is a practising strife and contention, and a *quarrelling* with others though they be at a *distance*. I above observed, how the publick peace of Kingdoms hath been undermined hereby. And it is a thing so obvious, that the same method doth disturb the quiet of *private conversation*; and also so disorders mens minds, as to deprive them of that inward calmness of temper, which becomes a Christian, that I need not undertake the proof thereof. And reproaches and censures have in many ages and places, so sadly and scandalously disturbed the *peace of the Church of God*, and fomented discords therein, that the greatest *Schisms and divisions* have continually in a great measure, had their birth, growth and continuance from this very cause. This, besides the experience of latter ages, may appear from the instances of the *Novatians*, *Donatists*, and some others, mentioned in the former Chapter.

(*o*) Naz. Orat. 14. παρὰ πάντων ἐπαινούμενον ἀγαθὸν, ὑπ' ὀλίγων δὲ φυλαττόμενον.

19. And now let any serious person consider, whether there be not a very great *pollution, and filth*, in that practice and

and behaviour, which contains under it so many several great sins. And if that mans body be in danger enough to be poysoned, where a Viper or a Serpent singly fastens upon him; in what sadder condition is he, on whom various venomous creatures fix, if there be not a speedy and effectual care for his cure.

20. Another general Consideration, to manifest the great evil of defaming and reproaching others, especially Superiours, is from the dreadful and *severe punishment*, which is threatned against, and will be inflicted upon them, who practise this sin, and indulge themselves in it. The common sense of mankind, even in time of *Paganism*, hath had such apprehensions of the hurt and mischief hereof, that great punishments have been *denounced* against, and inflicted upon *such offenders*, in many civil Societies; this carrying so great an opposition to the *laws of nature*, and the publick quiet and good of the World. *Lipsius* (*p*) tells us, that the *Athenians* imposed a *pecuniary penalty*, upon such offenders, and that the ancient *Romans* set a *mark* upon the forehead of him, who was guilty of this crime, with the letter *K*. If this was so, I do not doubt, but this letter *K*, was to signifie *Kalumnia* or *Kalumniator*. *Calumnia* being one of the three words, which are noted by (*q*) *Scaliger*, to have been only written with *K*. and not with *C*. in the most ancient use of the *Latin* tongue. And this was a publick declaration, that the *Reproacher or Calumniator*, deserved to be openly marked out, and branded, for an infamous person.

This sin of Calumny is severely punished

by the laws of civil Societies,

(*p*) Lipsius in Orat. de Calumnia.

(*q*) Scalig. Animadv. in Euseb. Chronol. p. 114.

21. But since a great part of mankind, have had as great an esteem for their good name, as for their *lives*, in the ancient famous Laws of the (*r*) twelve tables, it is declared, that though very *few crimes* were by those laws punished with death, yet the reproaching and *defaming* others, was thereby made a *capital* offence. And in the ancient laws of the Empire, this is related to have been sometimes punished with *stripes*, and sometimes by making the per-

(*r*) Duodec. Tabul. Fragment. Tit. 25. n. 3.

son *Intestabilis*, or one who by the law, was not permitted to make any Testament, to dispose of his goods at his death. But by the Constitution of (*s*) *Valentinian* and *Valens*, both he who is the *author* of a Calumny, and he also who casually findeth a *libel*, and divulgeth it, seem guilty of *death*: *to wit*, where the calumny is some great matter of defamation. And I above noted, that this offence was sometimes *capital*, amongst the (*t*) *Jews*. To this I shall add the consideration of S. *Chrysostome*, concerning the dangers of reproaching Superiors, with respect to what God established, and effected under the *Mosaical* Dispensation. He considers (*u*) that if he who reviled his *Father or Mother* must die the death, *Exod.* 21. 17. *Lev.* 20. 9. how severe a punishment must he deserve, who doth this to his *Spiritual Father*? And when he had mentioned the dismal misery, which befel *Corah* and his Company, for speaking against *Moses* and *Aaron*, he then considers the case of *Miriam*. *Miriam* (with *Aaron*) had *reproached Moses*, because of the *Æthiopian* Woman, which he had Married, *Num.* 12. 1. with other expressions of contempt. And for this cause Gods wrath was kindled against her, and by the hand of God she was smitten with *leprosie*, and must be put out of the *Camp of Israel*, and bear her shame. And as S. *Chrysostome* observes, this punishment for this offence could not be avoided; though *Moses prayed*, and fell down before God on her behalf, yea, though she was *Moses* his *own Sister*, and the person (as he goes on) who preserved the *life of Moses*, calling his Mother to nurse him, and led the women in their *praises*, Exod. 15. as *Moses* did the men.

(*s*) Cod. l. 9. Tit. 36. leg. unic.

(*t*) n. 14.

(*u*) Hom. 2. in illud, Salutate Priscillam & Aquilam.

by Gods judgment in this world,

22. But the inflicting the *eternal judgment* of God, and his severe wrath in another world, is far more dreadful, than any temporal penalty. And since the most High God is *infinitely righteous*, in all his laws, threatnings and judgments; whatsoever he sets himself against, and wheresoever he executes his *fierce anger*, it gives manifest evidence, that that which provokes him so to do, must be greatly *evil*, as well as *dangerous*. And it is necessary to abhor and avoid

and in the world to come.

avoid those things, which expose to the *divine vengeance*, which is utterly intolerable. Now that the punishment of those, who yield themselves to this sin of evil speaking, will be *very sad*, may appear by two Considerations.

23. *First*, By taking a review of it, and observing the danger of every one of the *several sins* above mentioned, which are contained under this of reproaching; and therefore what the sad consequence must be of all these *meeting together*. Doth it oppose the great and necessary duty of love? *He that loveth not his Brother, abideth in death*, 1 Joh. 3. 14. Doth it include a breach of the *fifth Commandment*, and an opposition against our Governours, when it hath respect to them? *they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation*, Rom. 13. 2. Is the violation of the *sixth Commandment* included in it? When S. *John* had said, *He that hateth his Brother is a murderer*; he immediately adds, *and ye know, that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him*, 1 Joh. 3. 15. Doth the reproacher speaking against charity, usually exceed the bounds of truth? all *lyars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone*, Rev. 21. 8. And among the eight *sorts of lies* reckoned up, and of all them condemned by (*w*) S. *Austin*, this which is altogether *pernicious* or hurtful to another, is the highest, except that one of lying concerning the *Faith and Doctrine of Religion*. Is this sin a practice of unrighteousness? *the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. 6. 9. Is it a yielding to passion, and an opposing peace and meekness? *they that do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God*, Gal. 5. 21.

The several sins contained in it, are all destructive.

(*w*) de Mendac. ad Const. c. 14, & 21.

24. Now if the *summ* of all these particulars be cast up, and put together, it will amount to thus much, even the *treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath*. And it will be hence manifest, that they who indulge themselves in this sin, do put several bars to shut out themselves from the Kingdom of Heaven. When our Saviour had said to the young

young man, *Mat.* 19. 17. *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments*; and was again asked, which Commandments he must keep; among six which our Lord expressed, as necessary for him to observe, that he might have eternal life, these are four, *Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honour thy Father and thy Mother, and Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thyself.* And I have above shewed, that in this sin of evil-speaking, especially when it is directed against *Superiors*, there is a transgressing all these four precepts.

25. *Secondly*, By considering the *severe punishment* particularly denounced against, or inflicted upon the practisers of this sin. I have above noted divers instances of Gods heavy *Judgments*, expressed in the Scripture: as the sad calamity which came upon our *first Parents*, and all their Posterity, for their hearkening to, and entertaining the reproach and evil suggestion of the Serpent; the dismal punishment of *Corah* and his complices, for their speaking against *Moses* and *Aaron*; and other such like. And the Author under (*x*) S. *Austin*'s name observes, that this sin hath much of *spiritual leprosie* in it (it is dangerous to the soul, and greatly defiles it; it is apt to infect others, and renders the person unfit for common Society) and God was pleased to punish it in *Miriam*, with leprosie in her body.

(*x*) ad fratres in eremo, Serm. 26.

The Reproacher by publick Censure shut out of the ancient Church.

26. When the strict rules of *Christian discipline* were exercised, he who *defamed*, reproached or reviled others, was to be *cast out of the Church* by a *publick censure*; which is an evidence, that the Christian Church accounted this sin, to *forfeit* the priviledges of Christianity, and that the persons who commit it, and live in the practice of it, deserve not to be esteemed *members of the Body of Christ*. And that amongst other great sinners, the *reviler*, railer, or *reproacher*, is worthy to be separated from the Christian Society, is declared by the Apostle himself, 1 *Cor* 5. 11. For the word λοίδορος, which the Apostle there useth, is of that extent,

extent, as to include all who utter *contentious, contumelious* and defaming words, λοιδορεῖν, being oft used by the (*y*) *Septuagint*, to answer the *Hebrew* word רוב which relates to *strife and contention*, and takes in all contentious reproaching words. According to the *disciplinary rules*, received in this Kingdom many hundred years since; offenders of this nature, especially if they defamed, or spake contumeliously (*z*) against their *Superiors*, were to come under the rules of *penance*. In like manner in the *Eastern Church*, in ancient times, (*a*) S. *Basil* adjudgeth both him who *slandereth* his Neighbour, and him also who should comply with him, or *give ear* unto him, to deserve ἀφορισμὸν, to be *separated* and cut off, from Eccleſiaſtical communion. And it was more anciently decreed in the *Western Church*, that those who should spread abroad reproaches, or *libels* against others, should be under an *Anathema*, according to the Sentence of the Council of (*b*) *Eliberis*. All which shews, how odious this sin hath been reputed, and how much abhorred and condemned in the *Christian Church*.

(*y*) Septuag. in Exod. 17. 2, 7. Num. 20. 3, 13.

(*z*) in 2. lib. Pœnitent. Egbert. n. 21, & 29. in Spelmar. Conc. Vol. 1.

(*a*) in Regul. brev. Resp. 26.

(*b*) Conc. Elib. c. 52.

27. And in the holy Scriptures, when the Psalmist declares the qualifications, necessary for him who shall *dwell in Gods Holy Hill*, or who shall be owned a true member of his Church here, and have an entrance into his glory hereafter, this is part of his description, *Psal.* 15. 1, 3. *He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doth evil to his Neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his Neighbour.* To this S. *James* his words are agreeable, Chap. 1. 26. *If any man among you seem to be religious and bridleth not his tongue, that mans Religion is vain.* S. *Paul* also assures us, that *revilers shall not inherit the Kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. 6. 10. and our Lord himself saith, concerning him who speaketh contumeliously to his Brother, that he *shall be in danger of Hell fire*, Mat. 5. 22.

and threatned with exclusion out of Gods Kingdom,

28. Now he who considers what God is, and what are the *excellencies* of his *Kingdom*, cannot account it any light Sentence, to be eternally excluded from his glory and presence, as the fallen Angels are. If this be not enough, the *desperate misery* of all wicked doers, who shall be refused

and with eternal destruction.

entrance

entrance thereinto, will make the ſtouteſt heart to tremble; and will change the moſt brisk and jolly temper into doleful *weeping, wailing and gnaſhing of teeth.* When they ſhall be under the aſtoniſhing ſence of the *divine wrath*; the infinite pains, expreſſed by the *fire which ſhall not be quenched*; the perplexing torment of a *terribly awakened conſcience*, and the worm that never dies, this will be an unſpeakably diſmal ſtate. To which may be added, the amazing preſence and *Society of the Devil* and his Angels, and other damned perſons, expreſſing their ſad out-cries and terrors, and the overwhelming ſenſe of an *hopeleſs and unpitied condition*, and all this to abide in thoſe black and frightful regions of darkneſs to all eternity.

and with an heavy degree of future miſery and vengeance.

29. And yet in the midſt of this unſpeakable and endleſs deſtruction and torment, the Scripture which declareth the rule, according to which God will denounce his Sentence, tells us, that thoſe who reproach, and ſpeak evil of Superiors, are of the number of thoſe ſinners, who muſt expect the higheſt degree of judgment, and ſeverity at the great day. 2 *Pet.* 2. 9, 10. *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reſerve the unjuſt unto the day of judgment, to be puniſhed. But chiefly them, that walk after the fleſh, in the luſt of uncleanneſs, and deſpiſe government, preſumptuous are they, ſelf willed, they are not afraid to ſpeak evil of dignities.* Where we ſee deſpiſing *dominion* or Government, and ſpeaking *evil of dignities*, is part of the deſcription of thoſe, whom God will chiefly puniſh. And to ſuch perſons will belong thoſe other expreſſions, of being *preſumptuous and ſelf-willed*: for ſuch they muſt be, who will be ſo inſolent, as to deſpiſe what God hath ſet over them, and forgetting their own ſtation to reproach them, who are in Authority. And though the former clauſe of this Verſe, concerning them who *walk after the fleſh in the* (c) *luſt of uncleanneſs*, or *defilement*, may very well be underſtood concerning them who practiſe adultery, fornication and laſciviouſneſs; yet even this clauſe alſo, may not improperly be applyed to this ſin, againſt which I am particu-

(c) ἐν ἐπιθυμίᾳ μιασμοῦ.

ticularly discoursing. For it is evident, from *Rom.* 13. 13, 14. *Gal.* 5. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20. 1 *Pet.* 2. 11, 12, 13. and other places of Scripture, that the *passions* of men, and the expressions and unrulinesse of them (which are contained in reproaching) are included under the phrase of the *lusts of the flesh*; and that this sin I am treating of, is *defiling*, is manifest from the former part of this Chapter. Now the direful *vengeance of God*, doth infinitely go beyond the severest executions, which can be contrived by men. And all men ought to have a serious sense of this, and all holy and godly men have so. When (*d*) *Polycarp* was threatned by the *Proconsul*, first to be *torn in pieces* by cruel wild Beasts; and when this moved him not, he was told he should be *burnt with fire*, unless he would depart from the Christian Religion: it was reasonably and wisely, as well as piously replyed by him, πῦρ πρὸς ὥραν καιόμενον, &c. Thou threatenest *that fire which burns for an hour*, and then goes out, but thou considerest not the fire of the future Judgment, and the eternal punishment which is reserved for the wicked. This is that we all ought to fear as most dreadful, and to avoid all the paths that tend to it, and not to have such light thoughts thereof, as rashly to gratifie any disorder of mind or *unrulinesse of temper*, which will bring us to this destruction.

(*d*) Martyr. Polycarpi.

30. Wherefore the care which all men ought to have, of preventing their own *misery*, ought to have this influence upon them, that they resolvedly reject and abhor this sin. Even *human penalties* have had a considerable force upon the minds of men, to restrain them from evil practices. When good *Josiah* heard the *law of Moses* read, and the judgments denounced against such offences, as that Kingdom was then guilty of; his *tender heart* became affected therewith, and he *humbled* himself, was greatly solicitous for *Judah*, and therefore he enquired of the Lord, and forthwith undertook the establishing a *great reformation*. And shall not men in our days be afraid of the most *terrible threats*, which the Divine Majesty denounceth, and the Almighty

Carelesnes in these concerns, is a daring presumption.

power of God inflicteth upon them who are perverſe and diſobedient? We live in an Age wherein ſin and doing evil is in too many inſtances become *bold and daring*; and many who make a fair pretence to Religion, ſtand not in awe of thoſe *heavy menaces of Divine vengeance*, whereby Almighty God hath declared his wrath, againſt thoſe ſins, in which they indulge themſelves, and which they ſtill reſolve to eſpouſe and proſecute, with a *preſumptuous confidence*, as far as they are *pleaſing* to themſelves, or ſerve the intereſt of a party. Amongſt other Arguments and Motives, to avoid all manner of evil, the dreadful ſtate of being under *Gods diſpleaſure*, is a mighty awakening one, and the thoughts of this hath had a powerful operation on the minds of men. (*e*) *Origen* tells us, that in his days, that he and others by the urging this great truth, concerning the *puniſhment of evil-doers*, had converted and turned many from their ſins. And God grant it may have the ſame effect in our Age.

(*e*) Cont. Celſ. l. 8. Ημεῖς διὰ τῆς περὶ κολάσεως διδασκαλίας πολλοὺς ἀπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτημάτων ἐπιστρέφομεν.

31. It is far from ſpeaking either the *wiſdom*, or the *goodneſs* of any ſort of men, that in ſo weighty a caſe as this is, it is difficult to bring them to any ſerious *conſideration and reflexion* upon themſelves. But they are never the more ſafe in any evil, for their raſh confidence and *careleſneſs*, which is no other than an aggravation of their ſin, and an higher provocation of God. I have had ſo frequent experience, how hard it is, by any ſorts of Arguments, to prevail with many perſons, who ſeem to have ſome ſence of piety, to make conſcience of performing ſeveral particular plain duties of Religion, (as the attendance on the *holy Communion*, and the Governing their *paſſions*) that I could not obſerve it without admiration and ſome kind of amazement. And I fear that all that man can ſay, and all that God hath ſaid, which is terrible enough, will not be effectual to bring many perſons guilty of this ſin of *ſpeaking evil of others*, into a ſerious ſenſe of it, and an hearty repentance. However ſuch perſons eſteem of themſelves, this behaviour ſhews a great prevalency of *obſtinacy and hardneſs*: and the time will come, when they who refuſe inſtruction, will wiſh they had attend-

attended to it. And as I heartily beg of God that all who offend herein, may take warning, and amend, while they have opportunity; so for them who will not, I shall be heartily grieved, and account it both with respect to themselves, and the hurtful influence they may have upon others, a matter of *sad lamentation.*

32. They who will practice this sin, may for a time please their own *passions*, and may gratifie the unruly tempers of *disordered minds*, with whom they converse. And by uncharitable *reflections or insinuations* against Superiors, they will occasion delight, *rejoycing and satisfaction* to them, who are enemies to goodness, truth and peace, and a well-established Order in Church or State; and they may hereby give these men encouragement, and *hopes of success*, in their ill designs. But in all this, they act against the interest of Religion, and their duty to God; and therefore they do so much the more expose themselves to his wrath and *indignation*, except they repent. And when they shall either *repent*, or bear the effects of *Gods anger*, none will then be more displeased with the folly of these their practices, than themselves.

CHAP. IV.

Contumelious evil-speaking in general; and all irreverent and disrespectful behaviour, towards Rulers and Governours, is contrary to the life of Christ; *in those things, wherein we are particularly commanded to imitate his Example: and* S. Pauls *carriage,* Acts 23. 3, 4, 5. *considered.*

1. HAving discourſed of the miſchievous unreaſonableneſs and extravagancy, and of the great ſinfulneſs and heavy puniſhment, which attendeth an unruly tongue, and uncharitable ſpeaking: I ſhall now conſider the *gentleneſs*, meekneſs and innocency; yea the *charity* and due reverent reſpect, which Chriſtianity teacheth us to ſhew, in our words, to others; as this is eſpecially propoſed unto us, in the *example* of Chriſt, and what is therein tendred to our *imitation.* The precepts of the Goſpel to be *kind* and gentle, *courteous* and charitable, and to *ſpeak evil of no man*, are ſo obvious, that I preſume every Chriſtian to be acquainted with them. And theſe things, together with a reſpectful demeanour to all Superiors, as they were conſpicuous in the life and *practice of our Lord* himſelf, will now fall under my conſideration. But concerning his example, ſome may poſſibly think with themſelves, that he was an *extraordinary inſtance of ſuffering evil*, and came into the World to bear the puniſhment of our ſins, and yielded up himſelf as the Lamb of God, to be a *Sacrifice*; but all Chriſtians are not to bear like ſufferings with him. But ſuch ought to conſider, that all his followers are to take up *his Croſs*, and to perform ſuch duties, and exerciſe ſuch graces, as are enjoined by his Laws, and in which we have himſelf alſo for our pattern, and are required to *follow him.*

The precepts and example of Chriſt ought to guide our practice.

Now

Now to manifeſt, how far the practice of our Saviour was intended, to guide and direct us to *reject all reviling*, and to ſhew *reverent reſpect* to Superiours, I ſhall lay down theſe following Conſiderations.

2. *Conſ.* 1. What our Saviour did in practiſing *meekneſs*, and in *not reproaching* any, or ſpeaking evil, is propoſed to us, as a pattern for us to imitate. This is clearly aſſerted by S. *Peter*, telling us, 1 *Pet.* 2. 21, 22, 23. that *Chriſt ſuffered for us, leaving us an example, that we ſhould follow his ſteps: Who did no ſin, neither was guile found in his mouth; who when he was reviled, he reviled not again.* So that in theſe things, it is not only an *hiſtorical truth*, when we are told what Chriſt himſelf did; but this is alſo a *rule*, to acquaint us what we ought to do. (*a*) *Joſephus* accounted it a great advantage, which the *Jews* had, for guiding them to goodneſs and vertue, that when the *Lacedemonians* and *Cretians* inſtructed others in their duty by *examples* only; and the *Athenians*, and many others, did this only by *precepts*, the *Jews* made uſe of both theſe methods jointly. But in the Chriſtian Diſpenſation, we have both more *excellent precepts*, and an higher inforcement of them; and alſo a more *exact pattern* and example, than ever the *Jews* had. The life of Chriſt recommends thoſe practices, in which we are to follow him, to be the moſt *honourable*, and the *wiſeſt* undertakings; in that herein our lives are made conformable to the moſt *glorious perſon*, that ever appeared in our nature; and we herein do what he who is *infinitely wiſe* choſe to do. And his life alſo ſhews, that as he in our nature was a perfect pattern of meekneſs; ſo he can and will by his grace *enable* us, (if we reſolve piouſly and diligently to follow him, and ſerve him) to perform theſe duties alſo, though we attain not to the ſame perfection. It is in all caſes very uſeful, (*b*) that he who inſtructeth another in what is good, ſhould himſelf do the ſame: for this hath a conſiderable influence upon the practice of others; but no *example* of any other teacher, can be ſo highly profitable, as that of

1. *His meekneſs, and not reviling, particularly propoſed to be our pattern.*

(*a*) Contr. Apion l. 2.

(*b*) Ign. Epiſt. ad Epheſ. καλὸν τὸ διδάσκειν, ἐὰν ὁ λέγων ποιῇ.

of Christ is, the perfection of which maketh it a compleat rule and guide. And his example, especially in the acts of his humility and lowliness, we in duty ought always to follow, and safely may.

(c) Nazian. Orat. 40.

3. Some things are observed by (c) *Nazianzen* in the practice of our Saviour, which are not to be proposed for our *imitation*; *to wit*, such as he did, according as occasions and circumstances offered themselves, as his celebrating the holy Communion in an *upper chamber*, and *after supper*, and in the *night*, and even that very night in which he was *betrayed*; and such also as spake the Dignity and Divinity of his person. And what he did in the discharge of his *Mediatory Office*, though all Christians are highly concerned therein, being interested in the benefits thereof, yet the performance of these actions, were so peculiar to himself, that none other are to do the like. Of this nature was his giving up himself *to death*, for the working our redemption, and to be a Propitiation for the sins of the World. But yet it is observable, that in this *singular act* of his Mediatory Office, (and the like may be said of others) that excellent *temper of mind*, in which he performed this work, is that wherein we stand obliged to follow him; and this will recommend to us *patience* and *meekness*.

His temper of mind is in all things to be our example.

4. Thus with respect to *God*, whilst he gave up himself to be a Sacrifice for sin, this was a rare instance of *obedience*, to the will of his Father, even in the most difficult performance; and of *submission* to the pleasure of his Father, in drinking that Cup which he gave him to drink without any murmuring or repining. And in these things it is our duty to follow him, and that the *same mind be in us which was in Christ Jesus*, Phil. 2. 5.--8. And with respect to *man*, this his Priestly action of making atonement, was performed out of the greatest *love* to us: and it contained the highest expressions, and evidences of this love, in that he was willing to do so much, and to bear so much for men, who were sinners and *enemies*; and also in that he did thereby effectually procure for them the greatest good. And here we are command-

manded to imitate him, and to *walk in love, as Chriſt alſo hath loved us, and hath given himſelf for us, an offering and a Sacrifice to God, for a ſweet ſmelling ſavour*, Eph. 5. 2. And towards them who were his cruel and *inhumane enemies*, who both crucified and reviled him; in his great ſufferings, when *in his own body he did bear our ſins*, he expreſſed a temper of *eminent meekneſs*, patience and kindneſs, and herein we are commanded to *follow his ſteps, who when he was reviled, he reviled not again*, 1 Pet. 2. 21, 23. And beſides this inſtance, in what other things we are not to imitate the *particular actions* of our Lord, there are yet ſome general conſiderations, with reſpect to the *Spirit and temper* of mind, in which they were done, that are of great uſe for our imitation. And on this account it may be affirmed, (*d*) that the *whole life of Chriſt*, was a moſt excellent inſtruction for our duty; which was S. *Auſtins* inference, after he had conſidered many things, which our Saviour did, and eſpecially his patience, meekneſs and ſelf-denial.

(*d*) Aug. de vera Relig. c. 16. Tota itaq; vita ejus in terris diſciplina morum fuit.

5. And the precepts of meekneſs, and patience, and of *governing our tongues*, are as plainly and fully enjoined in the Goſpel, as any other commands whatſoever. If ſome men will cauſeleſly be our *enemies*, and will hate, curſe and perſecute us; however men had been taught or allowed before to *love their Neighbour, and hate their enemy*, the will of our Lord is, that we *love our enemies, bleſs them that curſe us, do good to them that hate us, and pray for them that deſpitefully uſe us, and perſecute us*, Mat. 5. 44. And if we meet with them who work us evil, and rail againſt us, the rule of Chriſtian practice is, 1 *Pet.* 3. 9. *not rendring evil, for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwiſe bleſſing.* And theſe and other ſuch like precepts, are ſo excellent and amiable, that if the meekneſs, and innocency and charity which Chriſtianity requires, did univerſally prevail, and obtain in the World, it would make the Society of mankind wonderfully more *ſweet, delightful and comfortable* than it is, and their converſe would be free from the poyſon, and venome of the old Serpent. And ſurely the *laws* which

Meekneſs and patience are great duties of Chriſtianity.

which are eſtabliſhed for our guidance, eſpecially where God is the *law-giver*, who is able to *ſave and to deſtroy*, ought to be accounted of ſufficient authority and influence, to command ſubjection and obedience. But the *example* of our Lord, doth here add a mighty perſwaſive vertue to his precepts, beſides what I above mentioned, in that he was far *better* than any of us, who *deſerved moſt* from men, and yet was worſt treated by them, hath left ſuch an exact pattern of meekneſs and patience. And then much more ought we to practiſe theſe duties, ſince we deceive our ſelves, if we think the evil we undergo, whether of this kind or of any other, is not *deſervedly ordered* to us, with reſpect to the general diſpoſing of all things, by Divine Providence. Upon which conſideration *David* exerciſed himſelf in patience towards *Shimei*. And it may juſtly ſeem incongruous, that if a mean Peaſant, who is an offender, ſhall have the ſame treatment from men, with an excellent and *gracious Prince*, or ſhall be in the ſame ſtorm abroad, in his voyage or journey; that he ſhould be in a fury, as thinking himſelf *too good* to be thus dealt with, while his good Prince goes through all this, with a quiet and calm demeanour.

To imitate Chriſt in theſe duties is the way to happineſs.

6. But there is yet a farther very weighty conſideration, upon which all Chriſtians ſtand bound to follow *this example* of our Saviour; and that is, that the imitating him in *this very thing*, is directed and enjoined, as the courſe we are to take, for the obtaining happineſs, *Mat.* 11. 29. *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you ſhall find reſt unto your ſouls.* So that the following him in humility and meekneſs, is the walking in the path of *reſt*; for this (as all acts of goodneſs and duty) bringeth here *ſerenity* and peace, to the mind of him who practiſeth it, and is one of the great duties to be performed in order to *perfect peace* and reſt hereafter. And thoſe his Servants who thus *ſerve and follow him*, ſhall be with him where he is. Thus S. *Auſtin* (*e*), having conſidered thoſe words of S. *Matthew*, Chap. 11. 29. and of S. *Peter*, 1 Pet. 2. 22, 23. obſerves,

(*e*) De Temp. Serm. 61. & Enarrat. in Pſ. 90.

obſerves, that that example of our Lord, which it is neceſſary for us to imitate, is not that which is too high and great for us, in our capacities, to perform, as to reſtore the *dead to life*, or to *walk upon the Sea*; but it is to be *meek and humble* in ſpirit, and that we ſhould love not only our *friends*, but even our *enemies* with all our hearts.

7. And as this duty is *particularly recommended* to us, as one eſpecial and main thing, in which we are to imitate our Lord, and ſhall be highly rewarded by ſo doing; ſo it will be uſeful to take notice in general, that it is a very vain thing for any to *talk of Chriſt* and Chriſtianity, and of their hope and *intereſt* in him, if they do not follow his example, and live according to *his life*. And of this we are aſſured by S. *John*, 1 Joh. 2. 6. *He that ſaith he abideth in him, ought himſelf alſo ſo to walk, even as he walked.* And theſe words are the more neceſſary to be minded and ſeriouſly regarded, becauſe S. *John* in the former part of that Chapter, doth particularly undertake to declare and reckon up, in large and comprehenſive expreſſions, divers of thoſe things which are of *abſolute neceſſity* for every man to obſerve, who would be owned as truly *Religious*, and in a comfortable relation to God. To this purpoſe he ſaith, *v.* 4. *He that ſaith, I know him and keepeth not his Commandments, is a lyar, and the truth is not in him.* And *v.* 5. *But whoſo keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected, hereby know we that we are in him.* And after he had inſerted ſome emphatical expreſſions, to manifeſt the weight and excellency of theſe things, which he was now diſcourſing, he proceeds to aſſert *v.* 9. *He that ſaith he is in the light, and hateth his Brother, is in darkneſs, even until now*: and *v.* 15. *If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.* And amongſt theſe he expreſſeth what I now mentioned, *v.* 6. concerning *walking as he walked.* Which Verſe alſo is intended to expreſs, what is ſo neceſſary to true Chriſtianity, and communion with Chriſt, that they cannot conſiſt without it. How far then do they go aſtray, who are ſo negligent of Chriſtian meekneſs and gentleneſs; as if *fierceneſs and*

There is no true piety in them who do not walk as he walked.

passion, were rather to be accounted the practices of our Religion.

2. Our Lord's example peculiarly requireth reverence to Superiours.

8. *Conſ.* 2. Our Saviour's example is particularly ſet before us, to ſilence and ſuppreſs all *evil ſpeaking againſt Superiours*, and reproaching them who are in Authority; and to engage us to behave our ſelves towards them, with *reverence and due reſpect*. And for the manifeſting this, I ſhall ſhew three things.

To this purpoſe, it is urged by S. Peter.

9. *Firſt*, That this is the ſcope and intention of S. *Peter*, in propoſing to us the example of Chriſt. 1 *Pet.* 2.21,23. for the proof of which, I need only make a brief reflexion on the foregoing Verſes. That Apoſtle had ſpoken of the duty of Subjects, to their *King and Governours*, v. 13. commanding them, to *ſubmit themſelves to every ordinance of man, for the Lords ſake, whether to the King as Supreme, or unto Governours as unto them that are ſent by him.* And he continueth his diſcourſe with particular reſpect to them, unto the end of *v.*17. concluding it with theſe precepts, *Fear God, and Honour the King.* And *v.* 18. he comes to ſpeak of that duty and reſpect, which is due to thoſe Superiours, who are in a more inferiour *domeſtick relation*, and are not furniſhed with that Dignity and Honour, which belongs to them who govern in an higher rank and capacity. And here he commands *Servants to be ſubject to their Maſters with all fear*, &c. and then he proceeds to declare, what patience, meekneſs and reverence, is to be expreſſed towards ſuch Superiours, by thoſe who are ſubject to them, though they ſhould meet with *hard meaſure* from them, and ſuffer undeſervedly by them. And for the guiding Chriſtians in this caſe, he bringeth in the example of Chriſt, and this part of it particularly, that he *who did no ſin, when he was reviled, he reviled not again, and when he ſuffered he threatned not*, v. 22, 23.

10. *Secondly*,

10. *Secondly*, That our Saviour did behave himſelf, with that *reſpect to ſuperiour Relations*, both in words and actions, which is fit to teach us to do the like. In his Divine nature, he was *Lord of all*, even in the depth of his humiliation; and in his humane nature, he was advanced to an *high dignity*, in Union to the Divine, and as our Mediator. But yet conſidering him as made under the law, and in the *form of a ſervant*, and he therein carefully performed the duties of the *fifth Commandment*, as well as any other precepts of the law of God, both to his *Parents*, and to all that were in Authority, whether *Civil or Eccleſiaſtical*. When he took on him the nature of man, he became *ſubject* to thoſe duties, which belong to that nature, and tend to the publick good and order of the World. In his younger years he began his life, with *ſubjection to his Parents*, Luk. 2. 51. And this thing deſerves to be the more eſpecially taken notice of, becauſe as ſome (*f*) have truly obſerved, this is a main and chief thing, which the Holy Ghoſt thought fit to record, concerning the *actions* of that former part of our Saviours life; from the twelfth, to the thirtieth year of his age. And in one of the laſt actions of his life, when he was upon the *Croſs*, he expreſſed that honour to his *Mother*, as to recommend her to the care of his *beloved Diſciple*, Joh. 19. 26, 27.

Our Saviours practice expreſſed great reſpect to Superiour Relations, particularly to his Parents:

(*f*) Ludolph. de Vit. Chr. P. 1. cap 16. Barrad in Concord. Evang. Tom. 1. l. 10. c. 14.

11. He gave that reſpect to the *Temple-ſervice*, and to the Office of the *Prieſts*, who miniſtred therein, that though he came to put an end to this *typical worſhip*, by the Sacrifice of himſelf, yet ſo long as it continued in force, he himſelf attended thereon. In his infancy he was there *preſented* to the Lord; he obſerved the *Paſſeover*, and other publick ſolemnities there; and the night before his Paſſion, he not only kept the Paſſeover with his Diſciples, but declared the *great deſire* he had, to eat that Paſſeover with them, *Luk.* 22. 15. And when he had cleanſed a leper, he enjoined him to ſhew himſelf to the *Prieſt, and offer for his cleanſing as Moſes had commanded*, Luk. 5. 14. And I doubt not but that

To the Office of the Prieſts, and the Temple-ſervice,

it was truly observed, by *Ludolphus de Vita Christi*, that when the Scripture speaks of his going into the *Temple*, it is not to be understood of the Temple strictly so called, nor yet of the Court of the Priests: (*g*) *Ista duo loca non intravit Christus, quia non erat sacerdos* (*sc. Aaronicus.*) He being no *Aaronical Priest*, and observing the law of God, did not take upon him what peculiarly did belong to them by vertue of their Office.

(*g*) Lud. P. 2. cap. 29. n. 2.

and even to the Constitutions of their Synagogues; and to the Baptist, and the Scribes and Pharisees:

12. And he had that honour for the order and authority of their publick *Synagogue-worship* and solemnities, that it was his *custome* to attend thereon, *Luk.* 4. 16. He shewed also that respect to the Ministry of *John the Baptist*, though he was both in Office, and Person, far inferiour to himself, that he would be *Baptized* of him; and hereby he gave testimony that he would have all persons, whom God had called to any *publick ministration*, to be reverenced, and received with *honourable respect* in that service. And though the *Scribes and Pharisees* reviled and opposed him, such was his signal meekness and integrity, that so far as they sat in *Moses's seat*, or were invested with authority, and kept themselves to the Rules of the Law of *Moses*, and to the due limits of their Power, our Lord commanded the people to *observe and do* what they said, *Mat.* 23. 3. But where they departed from this rule, it was necessary to declare the falshood of their Doctrine, and the corruption of their practices, and this also was faithfully done by our Lord.

(*h*) Jos. Ant. Jud. l. 14. c. 17.

to the Synedrial Authority of the Jews.

13. And when the *High-Priests and Elders*, (*h*) who had some continuance of Secular Authority, under the *Roman* Power, sent Officers and Soldiers to take him; he was so far from giving the least countenance to any tumult or Sedition, that he gave a sharp *reproof* to S. *Peters* drawing the Sword, and undertook to *heal Malchus*, whose ear he had cut off. And when before the *judgment seat*, he was smitten by an angry Officer that stood by, he returned not a passionate word, but in these mild expressions replied, *if I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil, but if well, why smitest thou?*

thou me? Joh. 18. 23. And that anſwer which he gave the High Prieſt, which occaſioned this Officer to be ſo furious, contained not the leaſt intimation (*i*) of *diſreſpect* unto him. But being asked concerning his Diſciples and his Doctrine, he appealed to the *Jews* themſelves, to teſtifie what they knew, who were able to give an account of this, ſince he ever taught *openly in the Synagogues, and in the Temple, whither the Jews always reſorted.* And yet this innocent and reaſonable anſwer, was, it ſeems, the greateſt occaſion this fierce Officer could take, to ſtrike him. He commanded alſo to *pay tribute*, and to render what was due to *Cæſar*, but he neither ſpake nor did any thing, that teſtified want of due reſpect to any perſon, inveſted with Authority. Nor did his Doctrine give any liberty to his Diſciples, to neglect this reverence and reſpect; as appears from what was delivered as the Chriſtian rule of practice, by *himſelf, and by* S. *Peter, and* S. *Paul.* For herein *reſiſtance*, and evil-ſpeaking of a Ruler, is condemned and forbidden; and *honour*, ſubmiſſion and obedience to all Governours, and that even for *conſcience ſake*, and for the *Lords ſake*, is enjoined upon *every ſoul*, under the moſt heavy penalties even of *damnation* it ſelf. Wherefore let us herein be followers of him, who himſelf long *practiſed* (*k*) *ſubjection* before he preached it to others; and from him Subjects may learn to obey thoſe that are over them, when they ſee the Redeemer and Lord of the whole World, *ſubject* to *Joſeph* and *Mary*.

(*i*) Cyp. Ep. 65. Dominus noſter – uſq; ad paſſionis diem ſervavit honorem Pontificibus & Sacerdotibus, &c.

and to Cæſar.

(*k*) Stella in Luc. 2. Ludolph. de V. C. Part. 1. c. 15, 16.

14. *Thirdly*, We are the more obliged, to follow the example of our Lord, in behaving our ſelves meekly, and *reverently to our Superiours*; becauſe this is that, which the Holy Scriptures particularly recommend, in order to the *growth of the Chriſtian Religion*, and the advancement of its intereſt in the World. And if this be ſo, they who are the true friends to Chriſtianity, and therein to the *honour* of Chriſt, and the *happineſs* of men, muſt manifeſt this, by their awful and *reſpectful carriage* to their Governours, as well as by any other duty of Chriſtianity. And they who *tranſgreſs* herein,

Chriſtians practiſing reverence to Superiours, doth greatly recommend Religion.

herein, are guilty of such a crime, as hath a tendency to hinder the *prevalency* of our holy Religion, and to put a stop to its progress among men. And indeed where duties of *submission* are practised, out of principles of *Conscience*, and a sense of God and Religion; they are there regular, uniform and constant, and they speak this *excellency in Religion*, that it is that which calms and subdues mens *passions*, and brings them into a subjection to the rules of their duty. And it also manifests that Christianity, where it is rightly and sincerely entertained, by suppressing the fierce boisterousness, and *tumultuousness* of unruly minds, doth very much help forward the establishment, and continuance of an excellent and *beautiful order*, in human Societies, and promoteth quiet and peaceableness among men. And where the true Spirit of Religion doth prevail, it effectually will do all this good; and when vicious and evil men are apt to be *proud and self-willed*, and fierce and unruly, it makes those who are guided by it, meek and humble, *gentle and obedient*; which is so amiable a temper, and so useful and beneficial to the World, that the generality of mankind, unless they offer violence to their reason and conscience, cannot but think well of it. And it would be of mighty advantage to the reforming the World, if all who profess Christianity, were so far Christians indeed, that they would in these things, manifest the life, and power and excellency of their Religion.

To this end it is directed in the Holy Scripture

15. Now that the Holy Scriptures do direct, and enjoin this submissive and awful carriage of inferiours, towards all who are in Authority, as a *means* for the bringing honour to our Religion, and for the *propagating* it, and making it more effectually prevalent amongst men, is sufficiently evident both from S. *Peter* and S. *Paul*. S. *Peter*, 1 Pet. 2. 12. gives the command to Christians, who lived among Pagans, *having your conversation honest among the Gentiles, that whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorifie God in the day of visitation*. Where he exhorts them so to live, that they might

by S. Peter,

might win them who were yet ſtrangers to the Chriſtian Religion, into an affection to it, and eſteem of it. And as a particular means to effect this, he adds in the next words, *Submit your ſelves, therefore, to every ordinance of man for the Lords ſake, whether it be to the King as Supreme*, &c. So that this is here laid down, as a firſt, and *principal direction* and rule, for the bringing credit, and eſteem to Chriſtianity, among the *Gentiles*. And *Eſtius* (*l*) thinks, not improbably, that the Apoſtle the rather gives this precept to them, for this end and purpoſe; becauſe the *Jews* from amongſt whom moſt of the Chriſtians to whom he wrote, were Converted, were ordinarily reputed *perverſe*, unruly, and enemies to civil Government, and thereupon both themſelves, and there Religion were the more diſliked by the *Gentiles*.

(*l*) Eſtius in 1 Pet. 2. 13.

16. Indeed that particle, *Therefore*, which is of great weight in this Text, is omitted and left out, both in the various impreſſions of our laſt *Engliſh Tranſlation*, and in ſome other (*m*) more ancient *Engliſh* Verſions; which yet is fully expreſſed in the Original, by the general, and almoſt univerſal conſent of all ancient Copies, agreeably to the ſcope of the Apoſtles diſcourſe; and therefore it ought to be *reſtored* in our Tranſlation. And after S. *Peter*, v. 13, and 14. had commanded ſubmiſſion, and dutiful reſpect to the King, and other Governours, he adds this argument, to enforce the practice of this duty, *v.* 15. *For ſo is the will of God, that with well-doing, you may put to ſilence the ignorance of fooliſh men.* In which words it is declared, both that this *reſpectful behaviour* to Governours, is of great uſe, to take of thoſe oppoſitions which the enemies of Chriſtianity make againſt it; and alſo that it is the will of God, that Chriſtians ſhould carefully practiſe this duty (which is a great branch of *well-doing*) in order to the obtaining this end.

(*m*) The *Geneva, and Wickleff's*.

17. To the ſame purpoſe S. *Peter* proceeds, to require an humble ſubjection and obedience of *Servants, to their Maſters*, v. 18. declaring *v.* 19. this is *thank-worthy*, χάρις,

Or

or that which obtains, both in the ſight of God and man, a favourable acceptance, and good eſteem (ſo χάρις oft ſignifies as *Luk.* 1. 30. Chap. 2. 52. Chap. 6. 32, 33, 34. *Act.* 2. 47. and this is the moſt proper ſenſe of that word in this place) and this brings κλέος *glory and renown*, and deſerves honour, *v.* 20. And in this caſe as I (*n*) above noted, he *ſets before us the Example of Christ*, in a matter of *ſo great uſefulneſs to our Religion.* To the ſame end ſtill this Apoſtle *Chap.* 3. *v.* 1, 2. requires the ſubmiſſion of *Wives* to their Husbands, as a means to bring over thoſe Husbands to Chriſtian piety, who were not *prevailed upon*, by the inſtruction of the *word.* And here he requires, that they ſhew a *reverent behaviour*, v. 2. a *quiet temper*, v. 4. and ſuch a ſubmiſſion as includes the uſe of words and *expreſſions of honour* and reſpect, and this is mentioned as *well-doing*, v. 5, 6. And indeed the power and force of Religion doth eminently appear in the pious performing the duties of *Subjection:* for whilſt pride, and paſſion and inordinate affection, puts men upon ſtriving to be *greateſt*, and makes it an *uneaſie thing* to them to be led and governed by others, in a mean ſtation; conſcience to God will make perſons faithful, and ſubmiſſive in the moſt *inferiour relations*, and willing to ſerve him with humility, and meekneſs in the loweſt condition, in which God placeth them. And this is in truth both a *great* and a *good*; a *generous* and noble, and even a *divine temper* of mind.

(*n*) n. 9.

and alſo by S. Paul.

18. From S. *Peter*, I now proceed to S. *Paul*, who diſcourſing *Tit.* 2. 9, 10. of the duty of *Servants* to their Maſters, though the relation of a *Maſter*, doth not require ſo high a degree of *honour* and reverence, as that of a Prince and Governour, in great Authority, doth; yet the Apoſtle commands that Servants be exhorted to *pleaſe them well in all things, not anſwering again, not purloyning, but ſhewing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the Doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.* Where he requires from Servants, faithfulneſs and fidelity, a *ſubmiſſive temper*, to pleaſe in all things; and a meek Government of themſelves as to their *words* and expreſſions,

expreſſions, not anſwering again, and conſequently not giving any *paſſionate*, murmuring, contumelious or other *ill words*; and theſe duties are particularly required for the *adorning the Doctrine of Chriſtianity*. And it is ſomewhat to the ſame purpoſe, that in the following Chapter, the Apoſtle commands, that men be put in mind to practiſe ſubjection to *Magiſtrates*, and *meekneſs* towards all men, *Tit.* 3. 1, 2. as manifeſting thereby, what an excellent effect, the Chriſtian Doctrine and Spirit rightly entertained, hath on the lives of men. For before that took place and was entertained, the Apoſtle ſaith, *v.* 3. *We our ſelves were ſometimes fooliſh, diſobedient, deceived, ſerving divers luſts and pleaſures, living in malice*, &c. But *v.* 4, 5, 6. *after the kindneſs and love of God our Saviour towards man appeared*, the waſhing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt, wrought a mighty change in this temper and converſation, in order to the eternal happineſs of men. See alſo 1 *Tim.* 6. 1.

19 *Conſ.* 3. The *example of Chriſt* is intended, to preſs upon all Chriſtians this duty of meekneſs, and the forbearing to reproach any others whomſoever; and eſpecially a reverent behaviour towards all who are over us, though from them we might ſuſtain *real injuries*. And evil-ſpeaking to reproach or revile others, though it be upon *provocation* and receiving wrong is too common among men, but is contrary both to the example, and Doctrine of our Saviour. He was every way *injuriouſly treated* by word and deed; his enemies who ſet themſelves againſt him, were evil men, and guilty of thoſe faults, which they falſly and undeſervedly *charged* on him; and yet in his ſufferings, he made no return of raſh and reviling expreſſions towards them, nor yet of paſſionate complaints againſt them, but was brought as *a lamb to the ſlaughter*, and *as a ſheep before his ſhearers is dumb ſo he opened not his mouth*. Iſ. 53. 7. Such was the admirable practice of his meekneſs, and patience, and in theſe graces we muſt follow him, even under difficulties.

Chriſts example requireth kindneſs to all, and reverence to ſuperiors, though we ſuſtain injuries.

20. Indeed *reaſon* as well as the *Chriſtian Religion*, will condemn the return of *paſſion*, violence or evil-ſpeaking to them from whom we have received the like. For as (*o*) S. *Baſil* argues, *what excuſe* can there be for him, who returns the like to him who *provokes him?* will he plead *that another began?* would this defend the perſon who by compliance, *yields to the commiſſion of adultery?* there is no Crown of Victory but to him who *withſtands*, and fights againſt his adverſary; and as that Father adds, art thou angry at anothers reproaching as *being bad*, and yet thou imitateſt it, as if it *were good*, μιμῇ δὲ πάλιν ὡς ἀγαθόν. And what man can ſtand more *ſelf-condemned*, than he who complains of others who ſpeak or act *injuriouſly* againſt him, and at the ſame time followeth their example, and doth the ſame thing to them? For if this be not evil, he hath no occaſion to *complain*, or be offended; if it be evil in another, it will alſo be ſo in him, and ought to be avoided.

(*o*) Baſ. Hom. de Ira.

It is ſutable to reaſon not to return injury in word or deed to any men,

21. It is an unmanly thing, to imitate the croaking of a Frogg before you, or the ſnarling of a Dog againſt you. But though theſe be weak and ſilly things, the acting by *evil examples* of bad men, is far worſe, becauſe there is a moral turpitude, or *ſinful defilement* in ſuch actions. The rules of our holy Religion require us, to behave our ſelves otherwiſe, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 15. *See that none render evil for evil.* And though a bad man deeply infected with the poyſon of the Serpent, may have a peſtilential breath, and his words may be envenomed; the pious man, who is of a ſound temper of mind and heart, muſt have *no evil communication* proceed out of his mouth. It becomes him, and is his duty, to follow his Lord, who in this caſe did not only forbear to ſpeak, or ſo much as to think or *deſire any evil*, but to his patience and gentleneſs, he added his tender kindneſs and compaſſiate love, in *dying for his enemies*, Rom. 5. 8, 10. and praying for his perſecutors, *Father forgive them, they know not what they do*, Luke 23. 34.

and commanded in the Scripture.

22. This

22. This *example and doctrine* of our Lord, outwent the rules of vertue, delivered by the wiſeſt Philoſophers. (p) *Ariſtotle* deſcribes the vertue of meekneſs, to be that by which a man can *bear with moderation, both calumny and diſreſpect* and contempt, and is not eaſily moved to anger, but is of a calm and ſteady temper. And the *Stoicks* went ſomewhat further, by directing the wiſe man to eſteem nothing to be *injurious* to him. But our Lord and his Religion, not only undertake the moderating, and ſuppreſſing of irregular paſſion, but the overcoming *evil with good*; and herein his example and Laws are beyond all other patterns or inſtitutions.

(p) de Virt. & vitiis. Πραότητος ὅτι τὸ ἀωύθετα μετρίως φέρειν ἐγκλήματα ἢ ὀλιγωρίας.

23. Thoſe *Pagan examples* were conſiderable, which being mentioned by *Plutarch*, are related alſo by (q) *Origen*, of *returning kindneſs* for unkindneſs, both in words and actions. That *Lycurgus* not only forbare all *revenge*, againſt him who had *ſtruck out his eye*, but would not give over inſtructing him, till he had prevailed upon him, to ſtudy *Philoſophy and vertue*. And *Zeno* when he heard that one who was his enemy, had vowed to do him a miſchief; anſwered, and *let me periſh*, if I do not my utmoſt, to overcome him to be my *friend*. To which I add that of (r) *Titus the Roman Emperour*, who when *Domitian*, whom he had declared his Succeſſor, would not deſiſt from deſigning evil againſt him; he ſtill not only continued his former kindneſs to *Domitian*, but with *intreating and tears* beſought him, that they might have a *mutual friendſhip* towards each other.

(q) Cont. Celſ. l. 8. p. 401.

The greateſt Pagan examples are ſhort of Chriſtianity.

(r) Sueton. in Tit. n. 9.

24. But ſuch actions as theſe, were moſtly *ſingular inſtances*, practiſed only towards ſome particular perſons, and remarked as things *extraordinary*, nor did their precepts oblige others to do the like. But *Davids* tenderneſs was more extended and *general*, who behaved himſelf towards his enemies, with that *kindneſs*, as if his *friend or Brother* had been concerned, *Pſ.* 35. 11,—14, 15. And our Saviours love and affection, unto them who were his enemies, was *univerſal*, and his precepts ſo fully require the ſame, and ſo much

much beyond any other rules of practice, received in the world, that *Tertullian* might well say, that the Christian kindness towards enemies, and revilers, is (*s*) *perfecta & propria bonitas nostra, non communis*, a rule of *compleat goodness, peculiar to Christians, and not common to others*. And though the Christian temper of *meekness and love*, be at all times desirable, that *mildness* which was practised by some of the Pagans, that offenders should be set *free from punishment*, is not always fit to take place in the world. That Oath of *Titus* (who would not punish those two of the *Patricii*, who would have seized themselves of the Empire) was unadvised and indiscreet (*t*) *perituru se potius, quam perditurum*, that he though an Emperor on whom the publick welfare depended, had rather *be killed himself*, than put any other person to *death*. But the rules of Christian meekness, observe those right and *regular bounds* and limits, which run into no *hurtful extremes*, but promote and secure *true goodness*, together with the common welfare of mankind.

(*s*) Ad Scap. c. 1.

(*t*) Sueton. ubi sup.

25. This *returning kindness* to the most *ill-tempered* persons was a thing very familiar to the ancient Christians, even under their most heavy trials. But as good men may sometimes misapprehend the due measures, and rules of their duty; so affectionateness and tenderness, may in this case carry them sometimes, into the other extreme; to shew *too great respect*, to those their enemies, who are also *adversaries to the truth*. It was an excellent sweet temper of *Gr. Nazianzen*, that (*u*) when the Church met with many oppositions, and himself was particularly aimed at, he much endeavoured to *allay the heat* of the Orthodox Christians, whenever he discerned them to exceed. And when such Emperors reigned, as were friends to the truth, he declared, that this was the *revenge* he would take of his enemies, to endeavour they might be saved, and own those good things which before they rejected. And yet he had been loaded by them with *injuries*. The *Apolinarians* by their calumnies and clamour, had rendred him *distast-*

(*u*) Gr. in vit. Gr. Naz.

ful

ful to the people, and when he was under the *diſreſpect* of the multitude, the *Arians ſtoned* him; and this meek man was accuſed before the *Secular Tribunal*, to be the authour of tumult and *ſedition*. And after all his expreſſions of kindneſs, he was ſo ill requited by theſe his enemies, that they ſet a young man to *aſſaſſinate* and murder him: who was ſo far moved with the converſe, and preſence of this holy man, that *relenting* with tears and lamentations, he implored, and eaſily obtained his *pardon*. I confeſs, (*w*) he was by ſome blamed for ſhewing too much kindneſs to the *enemies of the truth*; and it is true, that good men, and eſpecially *Biſhops and Governours*, ought not to expreſs an *equal favour* to them, who *oppoſe* truth, peace and goodneſs, and to thoſe who *embrace* them. But that kindneſs, which may tend to their good, and the good of others, is ſuch an *excellent temper*, as ought not to be laid aſide for any *perſonal injuries*.

(*w*) Naz Orat. ad 150 Epiſc.

26. But the example of Chriſt, particularly recommends reverence, and *reſpect to Superiours*, though we ſhould receive *hard meaſure* at their hands. From hence S. *Peter* commands, 1 *Pet.* 2. 18,--21. the reverent ſubjection of Servants to their Maſters, not only to the *good and gentle, but alſo to the froward*. And if ſuch a behaviour be neceſſary, towards them who poſſeſs a leſſer degree of authority, in a *family*; much more to them in higher capacity: for the neglect of duty to them is an offence of a more *publick nature*, and tends to a more general *ſcandal* and prejudice. And hence we may further inferr, that neglect of *dutiful carriage*, is much more inexcuſable toward thoſe Governours, who are *good and kind*, and from whom we receive no *wrong or injury*. But how we ought to behave our ſelves, even to froward Rulers, we are to learn by the example of Chriſt, which is to this purpoſe ſet before us 1 *Pet.* 2. 21. He was without any crime, and though he was condemned, he *did no ſin*, v. 22. He *ſuffered*, but without *threatning*, or returning any evil word, or reviling again, but *committed himſelf to him that judgeth righte-*

The Example of Chriſt conſidered with reſpect to Rulers, from whom we receive hard meaſure.

righteously, v. 23. And such is the Order that God hath established in the World, that he who is *wronged by his equal*, or fellow Subject, ought not to *avenge himself*; but if the case require it, may apply himself to his *Ruler*, for help and redress. But if he be hardly and severely dealt with, by them who have the Government of the world, he must not then *avenge himself*, no not so much as by reproach, or *evil expressions*, but commit himself to God as a *righteous judge*: and this the example of Christ will direct him to do.

27. Yea, our Saviours prayer, *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do*, did manifest his great and tender affectionateness, not only to the common people, but also to their *Rulers*, who contrived and conspired his death. For even they also *knew not what they did*, as S. *Peter* declares, *Act.* 3. 17. And thus the ancient Christians, though ill treated under *Pagan or Heretical Governours*, did not only forbear evil speaking, and irreverent and indecent carriage, but thought themselves obliged, to maintain an *high respect* to these Rulers, and to desire their happiness and welfare. This (*x*) *Tertullian* declared, under an *Ethnick Emperour*, and that Council of (*y*) *Ariminum*, which established the Faith of *Nice*, under *Constantius* the *Arian Emperour*, in their Epistle which they sent unto him.

(*x*) Apol. & ad Scap.

(*y*) in Athanas. de Syn. Arim. & Sel.

Performing this duty is acceptable to God, and conscience towards him will require it;

28. And such a *continued respect*, and practice of duty to Governours, even under harsh usage, is that which *conscience to God* will oblige every Christian to perform. S. *Peter* therefore commends that temper, where a man *for conscience towards God, endures grief, suffering wrongfully*, 1 Pet. 2. 19. that is, endures it *patiently*, and without reviling, as the following Verses will explain it. And the reason for this is, because this duty of *respectful submission*, is not founded chiefly upon the *good temper* of our Superiours, but upon the *authority* they receive from God, and the *precepts* which God hath thereupon given to us. So that here the debate lies between *conscience and self-will*; whe-

whether the precepts and rules of Religion are to be followed, which conſcience will oblige unto; or the paſſions of men, which the unruly temper of ſinful inclinations are prone to comply with. Now where this Chriſtian duty is carefully obſerved, we are aſſured by S. *Peter*, that this is *acceptable to God*, 1 Pet. 2. 20. And every good man will *pleaſe himſelf* beſt, in doing thoſe things which are *pleaſing to God*. And this he may do, and bring *honour* to himſelf alſo, by this Chriſtian temper towards Governours. For the Apoſtle in that place tells us, *What glory is it, if when you be buffeted for your faults, ye ſhall take it patiently? but if when you do well, and ſuffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.* But if *patience in ſuffering for faults*, hath not ſo much of vertue in it, as to bring any *honour* and renown to him who practiſeth it, how *blameable* muſt they needs be, who are *faulty*, and yet though they be *free from ſuffering*, are impatient and *murmuring*.

29. To all theſe weighty Conſiderations, I might add, that this temper is a thing ſo neceſſary, that in the neglect of it, we cannot behave our ſelves as Chriſtians, or ſuitably to our *Chriſtian calling*. And therefore S. *Peter* V. 21. addeth, *For hereunto were ye called*: our Chriſtian Religion greatly requires us, herein to follow our Saviours ſteps. And when S. *Paul* did beſeech the *Epheſians*, to *walk worthy of the vocation, wherewith they were called*, the firſt things he requires from them to this end are, *all lowlineſs and meekneſs, and long ſuffering*, Eph. 4. 1, 2.

and this becomes our calling.

30. *Obj.* 1. But poſſibly ſome men, who are not willing to put theſe great Chriſtian duties in practice, may be forward to raiſe *prejudices*, againſt ſuch a Diſcourſe as this, and may pretend, that theſe things are not ſuitable to the true *intereſts of men*, but there is rather ſome ill deſign carried on by them.

Obj. 1. *This Diſcourſe is againſt the true intereſt of man.*

To

Anſ. 1. *It wholly deſigns to bring men from paſſion and ſin to goodneſs.*

To which I *Anſwer*, *Firſt*, That this really tends to no other end, but to *preſerve or recover* men from the ſnares of ſin, and to *guide* them into a true obedience to the will of God, and the doing thoſe things which are to the *honour* of Chriſtianity, by calming the unruly diſorders of mens minds. Where perſons are engaged in any unaccountable practice, with *paſſion and fierceneſs*, there is no caſe wherein ſin hath a greater dominion, and government over man, than in this. For whilſt any are carried on with *raſh heats*, theſe blind their minds, and hinder them from a ſober conſideration, of what they ought to do. And there is no ſinful indiſpoſition, wherein men are more *averſe* from good counſel, and more forward to be diſpleaſed with, and *oppoſe* them who would direct them better. And (z) *Ariſtotle* obſerved from *Heſiod*, that he who will neither conſider things rightly of himſelf, nor be *adviſed* by others, is ἀχρεῖος ἀνὴρ a man of whoſe good there is *little hope*. Wherefore he who will endeavour the recovering of men from ſuch ſins, muſt be prepared to bear the *hard words* of ſuch offenders; which was the lot of Chriſt himſelf, of his Apoſtles, and many of the ancient Fathers in the like caſe. Even as he that would be moſt inſtrumental, to extinguiſh a *prevailing fire*, may be ſcorcht, and muſt be touched, with ſome ſenſe of the heat and flame.

(z) Ariſt. Ethic l 1. c.

2. *It is impious to think the breaking the laws of God to be our intereſt.*

31. *Secondly*, Conſider how much it ſavoureth of *impiety*, that the urging the plain duties of *meekneſs*, patience, humility, and reverence to Superiours, ſhould be thought things of ill and *hurtful conſequence*; and that paſſionate *fierceneſs* and diſobedience, ſhould be eſteemed things good and uſeful for mankind. As if thoſe things which *God commands*, were for the prejudice of man, of whoſe welfare he hath ſo great a care. This would repreſent the Kingdom of Chriſt to be *divided* againſt it ſelf, and perſwade men, that if they will take care of their own *true intereſt*, and do what is beſt for themſelves, they muſt caſt

caſt off the *yoke of Chriſt*, and comply with the *temptations of the Devil.* But whoever will talk, or judge at this rate, if he do not ſtop his courſe, and return from the error of his way, is in a fair progreſs towards the *renouncing* his Chriſtianity, and the denying the wiſdom and *goodneſs of God* in governing the world. But then, he muſt withal contradict the ſentiments, of his own *reaſon and conſcience*, ſince no man can think it juſt and fit, that himſelf ſhould be thus treated, either with uncharitable cenſures, and *unjuſt reproaches*, and calumnies by others; or with an *untractable diſreſpect*, and an irreverent and undutiful behaviour, from his own Children and Servants. It would be folly enough for Subjects to think, that thoſe *prudent Laws*, which are the contrivance of the wiſeſt men, are their burden and dammage, and that it would be far better, for every man to be wholly left to his own will: when as the (*a*) *Roman* Orator truly obſerved, Laws are the *bond*, and the *ſoul and life of civil ſociety*, and the foundation of liberty; and we are therefore ſubject to Laws, that we may enjoy freedom, *legum idcirco ſervi ſumus, ut liberi eſſe poſſimus.* But it would be far more unaccountable to have ſuch diſparaging thoughts of the *directions and commands*, of the infinitely *wiſe God.* And it hath been a great part of Satans buſineſs in the world, to perſwade men to reject uſeful truth, and rules of practice, by raiſing prejudices againſt them, and thoſe that teach them. This he oft doth by pretending that they are againſt the *intereſt of men*, and that ſome ill deſign is laid by them who propoſe them. In this manner he began with our firſt *Parents* in Paradiſe, and ſo he proceeded againſt the *Chriſtian Religion*, as I have ſhewed.

(*a*) Cic. pro Cluent.

32. *Obj.* 2. But it may be further objected, If *Religion* be concerned and in danger, doth it not become every good man to be moved and *zealous* in this caſe, and both to *ſpeak and act*, what may tend to its preſervation. To which I ſhall return four things, by way of Anſwer, with deſire that they may all of them be ſeriouſly conſidered.

Obj. 2. *If Religion be concerned, ought not men to be zealous?*

Anſ. 1. Yes, *in Chriſtian and prudent actions, not in ſinful paſſions.*

33. *Anſ.* 1. It is very requiſite, he ſhould in ſuch a caſe be zealous, and active as a *Chriſtian*, in the diligent exerciſes of an *holy life*, and in frequent and *devout prayer*, and ſupplication to Almighty God, to procure his protection and defence againſt all the enemies of his Church, and their ill deſigns. And it is proper alſo for him, to be active as a *wiſe man*, in the uſe of all lawful and *prudent means*, which agree to his place and ſtation. But he muſt not be active as an *evil doer*, in giving himſelf the liberty, to vent *paſſionate ſlanders*, and uncharitable reproaches againſt others, or to behave himſelf *undutifully* towards his Superiours. If a Ship be in a ſtorm, it is deſirable that its paſſengers ſhould both pray to God, and in their places put to their helping hand for its ſecurity; but it very ill becometh them at that time, to fall into quarrels with them who take the beſt care for its ſafety. And it muſt be conſidered that (*b*) Religion is not ſo much a *name*, as a buſineſs of *life and practice*. And therefore they who ſpeak of ſhewing a great reſpect to Religion, by diſobeying its precepts, do really *loſe Religion*, under a pretence of *preſerving* it: for though men may deceive themſelves, it is a truth of undoubted certainty, that whoſoever ſeemeth to be *religious*, and bridleth not his tongue, that mans *Religion is vain*: it is an empty appearance, and not profitable to himſelf.

(*b*) Juſt. Mart. Paræn. p. 33. οὐ κ λόγοις ἀλλ' ἐν ἔργοις τὸ ἡμετέρας δ' σεβείας πραγμα.

2. *Gods Kingdom needeth not the help of Satan and ſin.*

34. *Anſ.* 2. Religion can never be ſo in danger, that God ſhould need any *ſinful practices* of men, to uphold his intereſt. His Kingdom is not ſo weak, that it cannot ſtand, without the aſſiſtance of the *works of the Devil*. Such methods may help forward the *ruine of a Church*, but will never be found the true way to its ſettlement and eſtabliſhing. Chriſt who founded his Church, did *ſupport* it, when it was in the midſt of perſecutions, even in its *weak beginnings*. And the exerciſes of *piety* and all good conſcience, accompanied with *innocent prudence*, are the way

to

to put us under his care, and intitle us to his protection, but he will have no concord with *Belial*. When the *preſſures* of the *Iſraelites* were heavy in *Egypt*, God delivered them from their Bondage. And when their tranſgreſſions had at other times expoſed them to great calamities and *ſufferings*, upon their returning to him, he raiſed up *Judges*, and gave them redreſs. And he knows how to defend thoſe who fear him, by various methods, and ſometimes in a more ſtrange and extraordinary manner. Thus the wrath of (*c*) *Alexander*, who went againſt *Jeruſalem* with the Spirit of an *enraged enemy*, was fully appeaſed, to the admiration of thoſe who accompanied him, when he met *Jaddus* the High Prieſt, in his *Prieſtly Garments*, and remembred that before he came out of *Macedonia*, ſuch a perſon, in that habit, appeared to him, and *encouraged* him in his enterprize. And when a *Diploma* was ſigned to create trouble to the *Bohemian* Church, when *Maximilian* the ſecond was Emperour, 1565, (*d*) *Comenius* acquaints us, that he who carried it, going over the Bridge of *Danubius* without the Gates of *Vienna*, the Bridge at that inſtant broke, and though this perſon was taken up dead, by ſome Fiſhers, the *Diploma* was never ſeen after, and thereby that Church enjoyed reſt and peace. And for the preſervation and ſecurity of his Church, in the time of its greateſt oppoſitions, he raiſed up a *Conſtantine*, and in the ſame age ſoon removed a *Julian*. And we have had inſtances of Gods care towards the *Reformation of our Church*, in defeating many oppoſitions contrived againſt it and our Religious Princes, and in reſtoring it again to its *former eſtabliſhment*, after our late troubles; and alſo in ordering the Reign of Queen *Mary* to be *ſhort*, and that ſhe ſhould have no *iſſue*, and that after her, there ſhould be a ſucceſſion of many excellent Princes.

(*c*) Joſ. Ant. Jud. l. 11. c. 8.

(*d*) Comen. Hiſtoriolæ. 109.

35. *Anſ.* 3. Religion can never be oppoſed with *greater enmity*, and malicious deſigns, than it was when our *Saviour ſuffered*: Yet then he *reviled not*, nor allowed S. Peters

3. *Religion was never more oppoſed, than when Chriſt was Crucified.*

Peters raſhneſs, but left us his example for our imitation. The Church of God upon earth, was never without the *enmity* of the evil one, and thoſe whom he could engage againſt it: but at ſometimes their oppoſition is more vehement than at others. When our Lord was *crucified*, the Devil entered into *Judas* to effect it, the *Jews* aimed utterly to root out the Chriſtian name. The power of the *Jewiſh Church and Sanhedrin*, was then engaged againſt it, and gained both *Herod and Pilate*, into a compliance with them. And there were great oppoſitions againſt Religion, even *fiery trials*, 1 Pet. 4. 12. When yet S. *Peter* requires Chriſtians, to follow the example of our Lords patience and meekneſs, and to *reverence Superiours*. But with us, bleſſed be God, our Laws *eſtabliſh* the true Religion, our Clergy *defend* it, and preſs the practice of it, and our Prince (whom God preſerve) *upholds* the profeſſion of it. But the Primitive Chriſtians, who lived under *Pagan Rulers*, who perſecuted the Church; behaved themſelves with *more honourable reſpect* towards them, than many now do towards thoſe *Chriſtian Governours*, and Spiritual Guides, who encourage and *promote Chriſtianity*.

4. *True zeal hath reſpect to all duty.*

36. *Anſ.* 4. True *zeal for Religion* is of excellent uſe, and very deſirable, but it conſiſts in pious and *holy living*, not in paſſionate and *ſinful ſpeaking*. And it muſt be uniform in minding all the parts of duty, which are incumbent on us. But they who are careleſs and negligent, in great and *plain duties*, can have no true love, and *conſcientious regard* to Religion, and therefore no *zeal* for it, but it is ſomething elſe, which they *miſcall* by that name. True zeal will put men on diligent, conſtant and devout attendance, on Gods *publick worſhip*, and the holy Sacraments; upon ſolicitous thoughts and care for the *Churches peace* and Union; upon all the exerciſes of piety to God, and of righteouſneſs, charity, meekneſs and due obedience to man. And particularly, both with reſpect to the hap-

happineſs of another world, and a comfortable eſtate in this, it will oblige men to curb the raſhneſs and ſin of their *words and expreſſions*, according to that advice of the Pſalmiſt, and the Apoſtle S. *Peter*, 1 *Pet.* 3. 10, 11. *He that will love life and ſee good dayes, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they ſpeak no guile: Let him eſchew evil and do good, let him ſeek peace and enſue it.*

uncharitable reproaches againſt all men to be avoided.

37. Wherefore let every perſon, as he values his own happineſs, and as he would approve himſelf a true Diſciple of Chriſt, beware of this ſinful behaviour, of ſlandering or reproaching others. And not the *ſpeaker* only, but he that *heareth* ſuch things with delight, is guilty of the ſame uncharitableneſs, and in like manner ſerves his own ſinful paſſions, and gives encouragement to the practice and ſpreading of this vice. S. (*e*) *Bernard*, therefore well adviſeth all men, to avoid a detractor as a *Serpent*, who caſteth forth his poyſon, becauſe beſides his own ſin, he who willingly *gives ear* to him, becomes guilty alſo. To the ſame purpoſe S. *Auſtin*, S. *Hierome*, and others who ſometimes ſpeak of the *contumelious ear*; or that mens ears, as well as their tongues, may render them juſtly chargeable with the ſin of *reproaching*. He that in this caſe ſpeaks raſhly or uncharitably, or that entertains ſuch expreſſions with pleaſure, muſt ordinarily intend a *prejudice* to another, and a blemiſh to his reputation: and this very intention ſpeaks ſome degree of *malice or ill-will*, contained in this ſin, and ſometimes a very high degree thereof. But the main hurt and miſchief fal's upon the *offender* himſelf, being contained in his ſin, and conſequent upon it. He like the man whoſe Spirit is ſo far envenomed, as to take poyſon in his mouth to ſpit it at another, is in a direct way to ruine himſelf, whatſoever prejudice the other may ſuſtain by him. So S. (*f*) *Hierome* declared, *detrahimus illi, illi non nocemus, ſed noſtras interficimus animas, we ſpeak unworthily of another*, but the main dammage doth not fall upon him, *but we deſtroy our own ſouls*.

(*e*) Bern. de modo bene vivendi.

(*f*) Hier. in Pſ. 119.

38. Let

and repented of.

38. Let all those therefore who have been guilty of this transgression, *heartily repent* thereof, that they may find mercy with God. But it must be considered, that *repentance* in matters of injury to men, by word or deed, doth not only require a *desisting* from the further practice of the sin, with due sorrow for the former miscarriage; but also a careful undertaking to *make satisfaction* for the injury done. It is therefore here requisite, that the offender do readily, freely and ingenuously *retract*, what hath been spoken amiss, and vindicate him who hath been injuriously *aspersed*; and also endeavour that his *future kindness* towards him may be equivalent to his past unkindness. And the man who refuseth this, is as far from integrity, as he who wrongs his Neighbour in his *Possession* or Estate, is from *honesty*; if he only forbear the repeating new acts of theft, fraud, or violence; but still *detains without restitution*, what he injuriously possessed himself of, which of right belongeth to another man.

A candid construction needful in private and publick cases:

39. And as a preservative against this sin, it is needful that we *regulate our passions*, and maintain a due government over them; and set a *watch over our lips*, humbly begging the aid of *divine assistance*. And we must also take care that we allow a favourable construction, and a *candid interpretation*, to the words and actions of others, especially of our Superiours. And to this both ingenuity, and Christian charity will direct and oblige us. Wise men have justly condemned those persons, who are guilty of calumny against a Law, in *wresting the words* thereof, to a sense never intended to the prejudice of Authority. This is done in some degree, when by subtil quirks, the letter of a Law is in a forced interpretation observed, but the true sense, and meaning neglected. This fault hath been taxed, by the (*e*) gravest Authours, as a *calumny*, and the (*h*) Civil Law hath particularly provided against it: and this includes a *false suggestion*, against the prudence and good design of Authority. But besides this, there is an higher degree of *calumny*, when a *Law* (or the words or actions

(*e*) Nimis callida & malitiosa juris interpretatione. Cic. de Offic. l. 1. Arist. Eth. l. 5. c. 10.

(*h*) Cod. l. 1. tit. 14. leg. 5.

actions of Rulers) is *odiouſly repreſented*, to intend ſome ill thing, which is contrary to the mind of the Law-giver: and this is a reproach againſt the *goodneſs*, care and *integrity* of the Governour. And the practice of this, which is too frequent, gave occaſion to Queen *Elizabeths* admonition, to ſimple people deceived by malicious.

Yet it is prudent to have a cautious jealouſie of ill men.

40. And towards all men, a favourable interpretation is uſually ſuitable to charity. Yet it muſt not be denied, that there are ſo many men of dangerous and *pernicious principles* and practices; that towards them, cautiouſneſs and *ſuſpicion*, in policy and prudence, is neceſſary, for preventing the miſchiefs, which may otherwiſe enſue. The Hiſtory of all Ages will give us inſtances, of ill deſigns againſt publick peace and ſettlement, carried on by *fair words*, and plauſible pretences: and it is great wi dom to diſcover, and lay open the ill deſigns of theſe men, and not to be *beguiled* by them. And with reſpect to the Church, even in the Apoſtolical times, there were ſome who with *good words*, *deceived the hearts of the ſimple*, Rom. 16. 18. And afterwards many Hereticks would uſe Orthodox words, in an *heretical ſenſe*; as the *Pelagians* would ſpeak much of (*i*) *grace*, in a wreſted meaning; and in ſome Councils, the ſubtil *Arians* gained advantage, by the *over-great unwarineſs* and charity, of other well-meaning Biſhops. But the conſidering theſe caſes, will not allow any, unwarrantably, to defame others: but will direct them wiſely, honeſtly and *cautelouſly* to provide in their places, for the ſecuring themſelves, and the publick good and *welfare of Church and State*. And theſe are things, which principally concern *Governours* and Rulers, whom God hath placed over others, in the Church or Common-wealth; but it is of univerſal obligation to all Chriſtians, that true *kindneſs* and general love, and due reſpect to all men, eſpecially to Superiours, ſhould prevail in them.

(*i*) Aug. de Grat. Chr. cont. Pelag. & Celeſt. l. 1. c. 1, 2.

Charity towards revilers required.

41. And let thoſe Chriſtians, who are opprobriouſly and *injuriouſly aſperſed*, together with pious ſtedfaſtneſs and *reſolution*, embrace the temper of *Chriſtian Charity*.

And

And let nothing of ill will take place in their hearts, towards those who revile or slander them, but let them heartily *pity* their folly, and their sin. A person of common prudence, if he discern a distracted man raving, and complaining highly against those who deserve well from him, will commiserate the mans sad condition, who would never have done so, if he had not been bereaved of his judgement and understanding. And the want of a *Christian temper of mind*, is as sad a thing, and on that account deserves as much pity, as the loss of the capacities of reason and knowledge. Let us therefore pray for them who thus behave themselves towards us. Thus as (*k*) S. *Basil urgeth*, did *Moses* in this case, *make intercession* for *Miriam*; and *David humbled his soul with fasting*, for those who slandered him; and our Saviour prayed for his *enemies*. He commands us to do the like for them who *despitefully use us*; and our Church directs us, to beseech God, to *forgive our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers, and to turn their hearts*. Wherefore let none render evil for evil, but *overcome evil with good*. And the right management of this duty, is a considerable action in our Christian warfare. It was the consideration of S. (*l*) *Austin*, when he was reproached by the tongue and writings of *Petilian*, that we are assaulted by *good report*, as a trial whether we can withstand the temptations to pride; and by *evil report* to prove us, whether we love our enemies: and it is our work to overcome the Devil, by the armour of righteousness on the *right hand*, and on the *left*. And upon a due behaviour in our conflict, we may expect a reward and crown.

(*k*) Basil. Hom. de Ira.

(*l*) Aug. cont. lit. Petil. l. 3. c. 11, 12.

42. To all this I shall now add, what I desire may be well considered, and therefore I chuse to close this first part therewith; and that is, That Christianity will engage them who truly practise it, that if they have offended, in uttering any thing *reproachfully*, or disrespectfully against their Superiours, they freely *acknowledge their fault*, and by no means continue in it. This may be sufficiently inferred,

'Tis necessary for them who have reproached their Rulers, to acknowledge their fault and repent.

red, from the general neceſſity of *repentance*, *from all ſins* and offences, againſt any part of our duty: and therefore if this be ſo *heinous a ſin*, as I have manifeſted, it calls aloud for ſerious repentance. But beſides this, I ſhall more particularly to this purpoſe obſerve, that in this ſpecial caſe thus much is taught us, by the *behaviour* of S. *Paul*, in that place which I have before mentioned, and ſhall now more largely explain, and inſiſt on, *Acts* 23. 2, 3, 4, 5. Where when *Ananias the High Prieſt*, (or a Chief Prieſt) had commanded him, *v.* 2. to *be ſmitten on the mouth*, *Then ſaid Paul unto him*, v. 3. *God ſhall ſmite thee thou Whited Wall; for ſitteſt thou to judge me after the Law, and commandeſt me to be ſmitten, contrary to the Law?* And v. 4. *when they that ſtood by, ſaid, Revileſt thou Gods High Prieſt?* Then v. 5. *ſaid Paul, I wiſt not, brethren, that he was the High Prieſt* (or a Chief Prieſt) *for it is written, Thou ſhalt not ſpeak evil of the Ruler of thy people.*

The example of S. Paul, *with reſpect to* Ananias, *propoſed.*

43. Theſe words are acknowledged to have ſome difficulty in them, and have been very variouſly interpreted: but according to that ſenſe, which I apprehend to be moſt natural, the Apoſtle in thoſe latter words, *v.* 5. (which are the key to the former) owneth and confeſſeth, ſome *ſudden unadviſedneſs*, in what he had expreſſed, *v.* 3. When in the beginning of *v.* 3. he ſaid, *God ſhall ſmite thee*, μέλλει τύπτειν, I conceive S. *Paul* by the Spirit of Prophecy, did know, that *Ananias* would come to an untimely end, and in theſe words expreſſed ſo much. For he would not have made uſe of this form of ſpeech in the *name of God*, meerly in a paſſion. And though *Ananias* lived after this, ſeveral years in honour; yet afterwards (*m*) hiding himſelf for fear of the Bands of Robbers, who were very miſchievous in *Judea*, he with his Brother was taken, and *murdered* by them. That *phraſe* of a *whited wall*, with other ſuch like, might in ſome caſes, admit of a favourable interpretation, to denote *painted innocency* and not real, according to the uſage of the *Jewiſh* way of expreſſion (*n*) hereafter noted. Yet this and the words following, being ſpoken in ſome paſſion, as

(*m*) Joſeph. de Bell. Jud. l. 2. c. λβ.

(*n*) Part 2. ch. 1. n.

appears from the connexion of these clauses, *Thou whited wall, for sittest thou to judge, &c.* the Apostle being admonished thereof, readily owns that there was something unawares uttered in those sudden expressions. There are indeed by many, great pains taken, to *acquit S. Paul*, from being chargeable with any, even the least fault, in what he had here spoken, notwithstanding his own free *acknowledgement*; as the like is done by many also, to free S. *Peter* from all *blame*, *Gal.* 2. notwithstanding S. *Paul*'s own reproof of him, and his plain declaration, that he *was to be blamed*, *v.* 11. And therefore I think it may be worth my pains, in a *weighty matter of practice*, to endeavour the clearing this place from difficulty: and I hope there will appear so much usefulness therein, as may excuse the largeness of my discourse, concerning the explication of these words.

His former sudden words not free from all fault,

44. Some with (*o*) S. *Chrysostome* think, that what the Apostle said to *Ananias*, contained no expressions of any *undue disrepect*, but that he used a just freedom, in speaking thus to a *Ruler*; and that when he unjustly received hard measure from him; it was *requisite* he should so speak to him with this openness and sharpness. But this is opposite to the genuine sense of *v.* 4. & 5. And therefore to reconcile those words to this sense, they think that the Apostle spake these words, *I wist not that he was the High Priest, for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the Ruler of thy people*, in such a way of complyance with his auditory, that his hearers might think him to have blamed the use of such expressions towards Rulers, when in truth he did not do so, nor intended any such thing. And by this method, that there might not appear any, even the *least fault*, in the Apostles *practise*, they admit a want of sincerity, in what he declared as a duty and *doctrine*, that thereby he intended to guide men into a mistake and deceit, (and that includes a very great fault in *practice* also.) And this is much the same thing with that which S. *Austin* justly blames, (*p*) in S. *Hierom*'s defence of the fact of S. *Peter* above-mentioned; and the admitting this, would cast a mighty aspersion on

(*o*) Chrys. in Act. 23.

notwithstanding S. Chrysostom *endeavours to excuse them,*

(*p*) Aug. Ep. 19.

on the Apoſtolical Doctrine. And that S. *Paul* himſelf did not think ſharp words needful to be returned to a Ruler, in ſuch a caſe of injury; is manifeſt enough, in that when *Feſtus* told him, he was *beſides himſelf, and was mad*, Acts 26. 24, 25. he preſently treated him with honourable reſpect, *I am not mad, moſt noble Feſtus*; nor did the Holy *Jeſus* give ſuch a return, though but to an inferiour Officer of the Court, who *ſtroke him with the palm of his hand*, John 18. 22, 23.

and ſeveral methods uſed by others.

45. Many others are of opinion, that when S. *Paul* ſaid, *he wiſt not that he was the High Prieſt*, he thereby juſtified his former words, by *denying* him to be an High Prieſt, to whom if he had been ſo indeed, he ought not to have thus ſpoken. To this ſenſe (*q*) S. *Auſtin* inclines, upon thoughts, that S. *Paul* would now own none other, under the title of *High Prieſt*, but only our bleſſed Saviour. And yet it is plain, that S. *Paul* did give this very title of *High Prieſt*, to him who was ſo called amongſt the *Jews*, Acts 22. 5. and when all the Chriſtians in *Judea* were ſtill *zealous for the Law*, even the Apoſtle alſo ſtill expreſſed ſo much honour, to the Prieſtly Service at the Temple, that he there purified himſelf, and deſigned to offer his Offering, *Acts* 21. 26. Others think, that he denyed *Ananias* to have any juſt authority, (*r*) becauſe he *tyrannically* commanded him to be ſmitten; as if Chriſtians were not to reverence them that are over them, not only the *good and gentle, but alſo the froward*, 1 Pet. 2. 18. and our Religion teacheth, that if we *do well and ſuffer for it, and take it patiently, this is acceptable with God*, v. 20. And (*ſ*) *Grotius* ſuppoſeth the Apoſtle might reject the authority of *Ananias*, becauſe (ſaith he) he came into his Office by *purchaſing* it with money. But I can ſee no particular proof of his accuſation; and *Joſephus* ſpeaks oft of him, as a perſon of great reputation and honour; and however ſuch a crime in an *inferiour Officer*, will not make invalid the authority of a *ſuperiour* by which he acts, untill the ſuperiour ſhall think fit to recall it: even as *David*'s ſentence con-

(*q*) Aug. Ep. 5. ad Marcel. & l. 1. de Serm. Dom. in Monte.

(*r*) Eraſm. in Act. 23. 3.

(*ſ*) Annot. in Act. 23. 5.

cerning the poſſeſſions of *Mephiboſheth*, was not void of it ſelf, though procured by *Ziba*'s *lye*, until *David* had otherwiſe determined. And it is abundantly ſufficient againſt alll theſe pretences in this Paragraph, to obſerve, that the Holy Scriptures, and the Spirit of God in them, do frequently own *Ananias*, to be at that time an *High* (or Chief) *Prieſt*, *Acts* 23. 2. *ch.* 24. 1. *ch.* 25. 2. and it is a bad way of ſolving a difficulty, by preſuming that to be *falſe*, which the Holy Scriptures declare to be true. Nor would it be any thing conſiderable in this caſe, if it be granted that *Ananias* was not properly the High Prieſt, as will appear from what I ſhall now add.

whether Ananias *was High Prieſt or not?*

46. He was manifeſtly ἀρχιερεὺς, an High, or *Chief Prieſt*, but very probably he was not eminently the *High Prieſt*, who entred into the Holy of Holies. In the Old Teſtament ſometimes, and often in the New, there are more perſons than one, who are called *Chief Prieſts*, and ſo there were in this very *Council*, before which S. *Paul* now appeared, *Acts* 22. 30. And *Joſephus* ſpeaking of *Ananias*, ſaith, that (*t*) *Jonathan* and *Ananias* the ἀρχιερεῖς, or Chief Prieſts, were ſent to *Rome*: where he placeth *Jonathan* before *Ananias*. And after *Jonathan* was murdered, by the procurement of (*u*) *Felix*, by ſome Ruffians, who pretended to come to the Temple to worſhip; and two or three others had ſucceeded *Jonathan*, in his High Prieſthood, one of which continued in that Office not above three Months; *Joſephus* ſaith, that (*x*) ἀρχιερεὺς Ἀνανίας, the Chief Prieſt *Ananias, did reverence the High Prieſt*, by making frequent Preſents to him, δώροις ἐθεράπευε τὸν ἀρχιερέα, which makes it very probable, that he was not the *High Prieſt*, ſtrictly ſo called. Yet it appears by many expreſſions in *Joſephus*, that he was in ſome eminent Office in the *Temple Service*: and therefore probably was the (*y*) *Sagan*, who was one of the Prieſts, which had a ſingular authority, next to the High Prieſt ſtrictly ſo called, in what concerned the things relating to the Temple, and was called ἀρχιερεὺς, a Chief Prieſt: And it is evident from the Hiſtory of the *Acts of the Apoſtles*, that

(*t*) Joſeph. de Bel. Jud. l. 2. c. xx.

(*u*) Joſ. Ant. l. 20. c. 6.

(*x*) Ant. l. 20. c. 8.

(*y*) v. Hor. Hebr. in Luc. 3. v. 2.

that this *Ananias* was a chief Officer of *Judicature*, and a ſpecial manager of affairs relating to the *Jewiſh Conſiſtory*, Act. 22. 5. *chap.* 23. 2, 3, 5. *chap.* 24. 1. And our learned and worthy (z) Annotator hath obſerved, that ſuch a Prieſt, who had the chief governing Authority, might on that account being ἀρχων, and ἱερεὺς, *a Ruler and a Prieſt*, be called ἀρχιερεὺς, a Chief Prieſt. Indeed a greater number than theſe ſingular perſons, went under the name of Chief Prieſts: but it is not to be doubted, but *Ananias* was either the *Naſi*, or chief Preſident of the *Sanhedrin*, or at leaſt an eminent perſon in that Conſiſtory, and on that account now ſate as *Judge*, when S. *Paul* appeared before him.

(z) Dr. *Ham.* Annot. *on Luke* 3. c.

47. Now beſides that the honourable *dignity*, which *Ananias* poſſeſſed in the Temple-ſervice, was conferred upon him by (a) the *Roman* Authority; the whole exerciſe of the *Jewiſh conſiſtorial power*, and the Authority thereof as to judicial proceedings, was now in dependence upon the *Roman Government*; which the Apoſtle declared both himſelf and others bound to ſubmit unto: and it had alſo a conſiderable foundation in the *Laws of nature*, and the general rules of *civil polity*. For the Political Government of the *Jewiſh* Nation, and their Conſiſtorial Power which was a branch thereof, was valid and of force, before they were ſubdued by the *Romans*, from the common principles of natural *juſtice*, righteouſneſs and prudence, according to which all other Governments in other Kingdoms were eſtabliſhed, (beſides what was ſuperadded hereto by the Law of *Moſes*) and by theſe *prudential principles*, very many things relating to their Synedrial Courts, were eſtabliſhed. And after the *Jews* were under the *Roman* power, they had *divers priviledges* indulged them, by many Reſcripts of the *Roman* Emperours and Governours: ſome by *Julius* (b) *Cæſar*, *Dolobella* and others, who treated them as *friends and confederates*, and yielded them a liberty, to enjoy their own *Laws and Cuſtomes*. And the like freedom was granted to them by (c) *Auguſtus*: and theſe Priviledges.

(a) Joſ. Ant. l. 20. c. 1, 3. *He was a chief Officer in the* Sanhedrin.

(b) Joſeph. Ant. l. 14. c. 17.

(c) Ant. Jud. l. 16. c. 10.

ges were now lately confirmed and amplified by *Claudius*. In the Reſcript of *Claudius*, he recites ſome contents of a former *Imperial grant*, whereby the *Alexandrian Jews* had a right given them, to enjoy the priviledges and *freedoms* of the City of *Alexandria*; and alſo that they had allowed them an *Ethnarch* or chief Governour among themſelves, (who yet muſt be in ſubjection to the principal *Roman* Officers) with a *permiſſion*, that upon the death of ſuch a perſon, a-another might ſucceed. And after this, (*d*) *Claudius* grants to all *the Jews*, every where throughout the Empire, the *like liberties*, with thoſe of *Alexandria*, and that they may obſerve their own *cuſtomes*, and keep to their own *Laws*. And therefore eſpecially the *Jews* in *Judea*, muſt enjoy the ſame power, of having *Jewiſh Governours* eſtabliſhed among them, when this was done in ſeveral places of their diſperſion.

(*d*) Joſeph. Ant. l. 19. c. 4.

The Jewiſh *Magiſtracy upheld by the* Romans.

48. And how much the *Imperial Law* deſigned to uphold the power of the *Jewiſh Magiſtracy* among themſelves, may appear from the Conſtitution of (*e*) *Arcadius* and *Honorius*, which declares, that priviledges have been granted to the *Patriarchs* of the *Jews*, (who were much of the ſame nature with the *Ethnarchs*) and to the Officers appointed by them, in times paſt by *former Princes* and Emperours, and it alſo takes care, that theſe priviledges, ſhall ſtill *retain their force* and power; and of the continuance of this power, (*f*) S. *Petitus* diſcourſes at large. And even in the *Juſtinian Code*, is owned and aſſerted the Authority of the (*g*) *Jewiſh Primates*, as they are there called, who are there ſaid to preſide and *govern*, in the *Synedria*, or *Sanhedrin*, in both the *Paleſtines*, and in other places. Wherefore the *Jewiſh Synedrial authority*, being allowed to be exerciſed under the *Romans*, might proceed upon the ſame foundation of ſecular and temporal power, with the Governments of *other Principalities* and Kingdoms. For this allowance doth ſo far continue their *former freedom* and authority, and permit the exerciſe thereof. And the *publick declaring* of ſuch an allowance (which was here done)

(*e*) Cod. Theodoſ. de Jud. & cœlic.

(*f*) Petit. Var. Lect. l. 2. c. 10.

(*g*) Cod. Juſt. l. 1. Tit. 9. leg. 17.

done) is in ſome ſort an *act of eſtabliſhment*, becauſe it forbids an oppoſition againſt, or reſtraint of ſuch an authority, and conſequently excludes the owning and *approving* thereof, and the giving force and vertue thereto: but this is much more plainly done, in the granting and *continuing priviledges* for the exerciſe of ſuch Authority.

49. And in that *Jewiſh Governours* did preſide, even over the *Alexandrian Jews* above mentioned, it is manifeſt that the priviledges of the *Roman freedoms* did not exempt the *Jews*, from ſubjection to ſuch Governours; only ſuch freemen were by the (*h*) *Roman* Laws allowed *an appeal* to the Emperour, from any ſubordinate Governours whomſoever. For *Alexandria* was a City chiefly priviledged, which from the beginning of the Imperial dignity in *Rome*, all the Emperours had *greatly honoured*, as (*i*) *Philo* who was himſelf an *Alexandrian Jew* declares. And there was great reaſon for this honour, becauſe that City was of mighty advantage to *Rome*, paying more every month, than all *Judea* did in a whole year, to the *Roman* Power, beſides other vaſt proviſions thence received, as (*k*) *Agrippa* declared in his Oration to the *Jews*. And from the time of *Julius Cæſar*, the *Alexandrian* (*l*) *Jews* enjoyed the freedoms of that City. Now from hence it appears, that the *Jewiſh Conſiſtories* under the *Romans*, retained a ſufficient right of *Judicial authority*; and therefore *Ananias* in this chief Council was to be conſidered, as an Officer in a Court of Judicature, acting by a juſt and competent *power and authority*.

(*h*) Digeſt. l. 48. Tit. 6. leg. 7,8.

(*i*) Phil. in Flacc. p. 568.

(*k*) Joſ. de Bell. Jud. l. 2. c. xii.

(*l*) Joſ. Ant. l. 14. c. 17.

50. Having ſpoken thus much concerning the words of the Apoſtle to *Ananias*, and alſo concerning *Ananias* himſelf, and the ſtate of the *Jewiſh* Conſiſtories at that time, I ſhall now more particularly conſider the ſenſe of that expreſſion, *v.* 4. *I wiſt not*, οὐκ ἤδειν, or *I knew not, brethren, that he was the High Prieſt.* Some think that the Apoſtle did not know the perſon of the High Prieſt, and profeſſed ſo much, as an excuſe for himſelf, in his having uttered ſuch words, which he would not have done, if he had known

The ſenſe of theſe words, [I wiſt not that he was the High Prieſt] *enquired into.*

known him to be the High Prieſt, ſince the Law commands, *Thou ſhalt not ſpeak evil of the Ruler of thy people.* But they ſeem not to conſider, that whether the word *High Prieſt*, be taken in a more ſtrict or more large ſenſe, that Law hath no ſingular and *peculiar reſpect* to the High Prieſt alone: and S. *Paul* did know *Ananias* to be a *Ruler*, and to *ſit as Judge*, and expreſſed ſo much *v.* 3. declaring that he *ſate to judge him according to the Law.* And therefore ſome other ſenſe of theſe words, muſt be enquired after. And that which ſeemeth to me moſt agreeable to the whole Context, and free from all juſt exceptions, is this; that as the word *to know*, oft ſignifieth to approve, regard, affect, or own; ſo it oft-times ſignifies to *conſider duly*, and to attend to, and think on, and may be ſo beſt taken in this place. So ידע in the *Hebrew*, (from whence probably οἶδα and εἶδω had their original) is ſometimes rendred in our *Engliſh* Tranſlation to *conſider*, as *Deut.* 8. 5. *Jud.* 18. 14. 2 *King.* 5. 7. and this ſenſe is moſt agreeable to many other places, as *Gen.* 12. 11. *Ex.* 2. 25. *Deut.* 4. 39. *chap.* 9. 6. *Judg.* 15. 11. *Ruth* 3. 4. 2 *Sam.* 24. 13. 2 *Chr.* 12. 8. *chap.* 13. 5. with many others. And among the *Rabbins* ידעתו *& obſerva iſtud*, is an uſual expreſſion when they require a ſpecial *attention* or obſervation, or a particular *notice* and conſideration to be taken of any thing, as is noted by (*m*) *Buxtorf.* And in that ſenſe is οἶδα moſt properly to be underſtood, in many places of the New Teſtament, to denote, to conſider. It appears ſo uſed by S. *Luke*, Luk. 2. 49. *chap.* 9. 55. *chap.* 19. 22. and alſo *Joh.* 6. 61. *chap.* 11. 49. *chap.* 19. 10. *Epheſ.* 6. 8, 9. *Col.* 3. 24. *chap.* 4. 1. And if we thus expound theſe words of the Apoſtle, the ſenſe of theſe words will be this, that he owneth ſomewhat in his former expreſſion to have been words of *ſudden ſurprize*, and ſome degree of inadvertency; and that being moved with the injury offered to him, they fell from him over haſtily, and he did not on the ſudden duly think of, *attend to*, and conſider the Office and Dignity of the perſon to whom he ſpake, otherwiſe

(*m*) Buxt. Lex. Rab. in ידע p. 935.

otherwiſe he would not have uſed the leaſt expreſſion, which might intimate any degree of *unbecoming reflection*, or diſreſpect, towards a perſon in Authority, ſince he acknowledgeth this to be his duty, not to *ſpeak evil of the Ruler of the people*: while the (*n*) *Jewiſh* Zealots ſpake and acted inſolently againſt them without any remorſe.

(*n*) Joſeph. de Bel. Jud. l. 4. c. 19. gr.

51. And that there was ſomewhat in ſome meaſure *blameable*, in the foregoing expreſſions of S. *Paul*, is plainly acknowledged and declared by (*o*) S. *Hierome*, and by (*p*) *Procopius*, as I find him cited agreeably to my ſenſe, and by (*q*) Dr. *Hammond*, and other worthy men. And they who would by no means admit any thing to have been ſaid, or done *amiſs*, by any of the Apoſtles, might conſider, that even they were to pray, for the *forgiveneſs of their treſpaſſes*; and that ſuch things as S. *Peters rebuking*, and *denying* his Maſter, and drawing his *ſword*; the Apoſtles arguing who ſhould be the *greateſt*, and their *forſaking* their Lord, when he was laid hold on; the deſire of the Sons of *Zebedee*, for the chief advancement in *Chriſts Kingdom*, and their forwardneſs to call for *fire* from Heaven; S. *Peter* and *Barnabas* their *withdrawing at Antioch*; the ſharp contention betwixt *Paul and Barnabas*; and ſome other things, ought not to be juſtified and defended. And (*r*) ſome of the ancient Chriſtian Writers urged it, as an evidence of the *integrity* of the Pen-men of the Holy Scriptures, and that they wholly deſigned to keep to truth, and not to purſue any intereſt, in that they did not endeavour to conceal, and ſilence the *failings of the Apoſtles*, and of their chiefeſt friends, which had never been known to the world in after ages, but from their writings. Even S. *Mark*, who was S. *Peters follower*, did not omit to expreſs his denying our Lord; and S. *Luke*, who was S. *Pauls companion*, recorded this expreſſion of his, and his acknowledgement thereupon. And a *ſudden haſty expreſſion*, which was upon a great provocation, and was ſoon *recalled*, was no fault of any high de-

(*o*) Adv. Pelag. l. 3. c. 1.
(*p*) In Willet on Exod. 22. qu. 52.
(*q*) Paraph. on Act. 23. 5.

The Apoſtles were not without failings.

(*r*) Orig. cont. Celſ. l. 2. p. 69, 70.

gree, especially considering the right the Apostle had, being a *Roman*, to claim satisfaction, even from a *Governour*, who should offer him an injury, in proceeding against Law, as was done *Acts* 16.37,38,39. and in part, *Acts* 22.25,26,29.

The great assistances of the Apostles considered.

52. Nor is this interpretation, which admits some degree of blame, in the expression of the Apostle, inconsistent, as I conceive, with the *promises* of our Saviour to his Apostles, when they should be brought into the *Synagogues*, and before *Governours and Kings*, for his names sake; that the *Holy Ghost should teach them in the same hour, what they ought to say*, Luke 12.12. and that he *will give them a mouth and wisdom, which all their adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist*, Luk. 21.15. For 1. It may be considered, that due *dispositions* are requisite, for obtaining the benefit of any of Gods promises, and his special guidance, and therefore a sudden complyance with some *hastiness of temper*, might for the present, hinder the fullest obtaining the benefit of that promise. As S. *Peter* after he had asked our Lord, whether he should *smite with the Sword*, overhastily undertaking the action, before he had received his answer, deprived himself at that present, of the advantage of that *good advice* and guidance, for his *present action*, which he might otherwise have had. 2. The thing mainly intended in these promises, is, that the Spirit of God should so guide and assist the *Apostles*, (and others, as S. *Stephen*) in their bearing witness to Christianity, before Rulers and Governours, that they should not be *ashamed* to own the truth, and that they should be enabled to make it manifest, with such *evidence*, as should baffle and confound their *adversaries*, who could not deny or disprove the truth, of what they alledged in their testimony. And S. *Paul* did thus confound them, who opposed his Doctrine in *Jerusalem*, Act. 22.1—22. *chap.* 23. 1, 6 — 9, 11. 3. Whereas the only thing in any wise *amiss*, in what the Apostle said, was, that there fell from him a sudden expressi-

preſſion too much *reflective* upon a Governour; it may be here noted, *Firſt*, That theſe his words appear all of them to be *truth*, and the fault in them was, they were uttered with ſome *paſſionateneſs* of temper, and without ſufficient reverence in the *manner of expreſſion*. *Secondly*, By his *recalling* ſuch words as theſe, and owning his ſurprize therein; the tenderneſs of his *conſcience*, and the ſtrictneſs of his *doctrine*, concerning the honouring of Rulers, and againſt the leaſt word of *undue diſreſpect* towards them, is in a more eminent manner ſet down, for the inſtruction and guidance of all Ages, than if there had been no appearance at all, of any thing blameable in his former expreſſion. *Thirdly*, This is the more remarkable, becauſe this his *reflexion* upon, and *retracting* what he had thus ſpoken, as alſo the Doctrine he urgeth thereupon, was no doubt under the guidance of that *Spirit*, which our Saviour had promiſed in this caſe, and ſo makes his Example in this particular, to be a *neceſſary pattern* for every Chriſtian, that if he ſhould offend in the like manner, he ought to retract and own his *fault*, in the leaſt miſcarriage of his expreſſion.

53. From this Practice and Doctrine of the Apoſtle, I ſhall further obſerve,

S. Paul's reflective words though but once ſpoken, and upon a ſudden provocation,

Firſt, that though theſe words were but *once ſpoken*, and then alſo in a *ſudden ſurprize*, and upon a *great provocation* of injurious dealing; though the Apoſtle had never gone ſo far as frequently to blaze abroad, by open *contumelious expreſſions*, or ſecret *whiſperings*, what might ill affect the people againſt their Governour; Yet in this caſe he acknowledged the fault, and would by no means perſiſt in it, or do ſo any more. And if one *ſingle* reflective expreſſion was not allowable in him, who was commanded to be *ſmitten againſt law*, and had no intention of defaming Authority, the ſame (and much more the frequently repeated uttering *deſigned reproaches*) is far more blameable in them,

who receive no ſuch injury, but are rather *favoured*, beyond what the Law eſtabliſheth. Nor did the Apoſtle allow of ſuch expreſſions, towards *Ananias* being a Ruler, though he was on this account a *bad man*, as being a zealous oppoſer of the true Chriſtian Doctrine. And he would in no wiſe juſtifie, but retract ſuch reflective words though true, as thoſe which in ſome paſſion unwarily fell from him.

and to a ſubordinate Ruler,

54. *Secondly*, *Ananias* was far from being a *Supreme Governour*. *Cæſar* had now the chief Authority in *Judea*, and *Felix* was a Deputy Governour under him: and both the Preſident of *Judea*, and the High Prieſt, were under the power of the (*f*) *Governour of Syria*. And *Ananias* was ſo far inferiour to *Felix* in his Authority, that he with the other Synedrial Elders, appeared upon ſummons, before the *tribunal of Felix*, as an Higher Court, to deſire judgment againſt Saint *Paul*, *Acts* 24. 1. And this, and other things alſo he did, at the *command of Lyſias*, the Chief Captain, *Act.* 22. 30. *chap.* 23. 30. *chap.* 24. 8. which ſhews his Authority alſo, to be ſuperior to that of *Ananias*. And both *Felix* and *Lyſias*, diſpoſed of the Apoſtle *Paul*, otherwiſe than was deſired by *Ananias*, and the Elders. And the *Jewiſh Conſiſtory*, in which *Ananias* ſate, was now in a *declining ſtate*, all power of *capital puniſhments* having for about thirty years been taken from them, by the *Roman* Authority. Now expreſſions aſperſing a Superiour, or *ſupreme Governour*, are the greater fault, becauſe they affront an higher Authority, to which a more eminent degree of honour and reverence is due: yet S. *Paul* would not *defend*, but condemn ſuch a behaviour, towards one who was in ſuch an *inferiour*, ſubordinate and declining Authority as that of *Ananias* and the *Sanhedrin* then was.

(*f*) Joſeph. Ant. l. 20. c. 5. & de Bell. Jud. l. 2. c. 14.

55. *Thirdly*,

55. *Thirdly*, The Apoſtle declared thus much, *preſently* after he had ſpoken the former words, and as ſoon as he had conſidered them, and was enquired of, concerning them, he made no demurr or *delay*; but forthwith he forwardly and readily, owned the indecency and *unlawfulneſs* of ſuch expreſſions. And this he alſo did very plainly and *openly*, before the whole Aſſembly of the *Jews*, that no perſon might either defend his practice, or follow his example, where he had ſpoken amiſs. This alſo he did in a *Civil Conſiſtory* or Court, though he was an Apoſtle, and being there charged with a fault, in his behaviour towards a Ruler, he doth not ſo decline the thing, as if it was fit for him to give his anſwer in a Civil Conſiſtory; But he there owns his duty and his fault alſo, and treated Civil Governours at another rate, than either the *Conclave* or the *Kirk* would do. For though a Prieſt was ſometimes, not always, Preſident of the *Jewiſh Sanhedrin*, that was chiefly a Civil Court, (*t*) inflicted *Civil puniſhments*: and took cogniſance of criminal *cauſes, and appeals* from other inferiour Judicatures: and in the progreſs of this caſe for which S. *Paul* was brought before them, after he had been heard by *Felix* and *Feſtus* he *appealed* unto *Cæſar*.

are preſently and openly recalled in the face of a Civil Court.

(*t*) Seld de Syned. l. 3. c. 1, 2, &c.

56. Now I think that what I have ſaid, is not inconſiderable, for my Expoſition of theſe words, which repreſents them to be a *ſignal example*, of acknowledging the *fault, of any indecent expreſſion* towards a Superiour. And I thought the influence which this ought to have upon the lives of men, to be of ſo great uſe, that it may be a ſufficient *excuſe* for my long diſcourſe upon theſe words. Yet I muſt acknowledge, that the greater number of Writers which I have ſeen, who diſcourſe of theſe words, and ſome very worthy and learned men, do excuſe the Apoſtle's words to *Ananias* from *all blame*, according to ſome of the methods above mentioned; eſpecially by ſuppoſing that he did

did not *know Ananias* to be an High Prieſt, or Ruler, or that he did not *own* his Authority. But ſince the Apoſtle was deſignedly brought to appear before the *Jewiſh Council*, Act. 22. 30. and when he began to ſpeak, did *earneſtly behold the Council*, or the συνέδριον, or perſons of the *Sanhedrin*, Act. 23. 1. and the Judges of the *Sanhedrin* had *their Bench* fixed (*u*), on which every one of them ſate in their order, in the form of a *ſemi-circle*; and the Apoſtle having been long before acquainted, with the order and buſineſs of that Court, *Act.* 22. 5. and now mentioning *Ananias*, to be one that *ſate to judge him*, there ſeems no colour left for this opinion. And from what I have ſaid above, *n.* 45 — 49. I account it manifeſt, that the *authority* of *Ananias* could not be *diſowned* by the Apoſtle. However I ſhall here obſerve, that they who ſhall not be ſatisfied with my interpretation of theſe words, cannot well frame any other tolerable ſenſe of them, than ſuch, according to which they muſt condemn and blame all *indecency of expreſſion* (and much more, *inſolency of deportment*) towards Superiours; and alſo ſhew the Apoſtles forwardneſs, to wipe off all appearance of *ſuſpicion*, of his allowing any ſuch thing in himſelf or others. And that he did with great readineſs, and openneſs, declare that the admitting any ſuch thing (though in his circumſtances above obſerved, *n.* 53. 54, 55. and in the managing ſo good a cauſe as that of *Chriſtianity* was and is) is contrary to the Laws of God and Religion: And that thoſe who ſhall wittingly thus misbehave themſelves, muſt be inexcuſable: and that they who are *ſuſpected* to have erred in this kind (and therefore much more they who have really done ſo) ought thus to behave and clear themſelves, by a free declaration, of their *honourable reſpect*, to them who are in Authority, as S. *Paul* here practiſed himſelf, and taught others.

(*u*) Seld. de Syned. l 2 c. 6. n. 1.

Meet he duty urged, muſt be granted upon other Expoſitions.

57. But this duty, of being ready freely to *confeſs their fault*, in what they have openly ſaid or done amiſs, with a care to *repent* thereof, and to do ſo no more; is, I fear, by ſome

ſome rejected out of this groſs miſtake, that it is a *ſhameful thing* to acknowledge a fault. Whereas in truth it is a very ſhameful thing to continue in ſin: but there is no more ſhame in an offenders repenting, and acknowledging he hath done amiſs, than there is in becoming *wiſe and good*, and doing his duty, and pleaſing God. And God grant that all who have neglected their duty, in this or any other branch, thereof, may ſo conſider their wayes as to amend and reform them.

The

The Second Part,

Concerning the uſefulneſs *of a ſober* Cenſure *of ſuch Parties or perſons, who practiſe* evil, *or propagate* falſhood; *with an enquiry into ſome different parties, who make profeſſion of Chriſtianity.*

CHAP. I.

To ſpeak againſt *evil perſons and practices duely and diſcreetly, and to the juſt diſcrediting and diſparaging bad* Principles and Doctrines, *is reaſonable and good; with an account of what Rules are here to be obſerved.*

1. HAving declared in the former Part, how unreaſonable and evil, uncharitable and *paſſionate reproaches* are, eſpecially againſt Superiors: I ſhall now ſhew that Chriſtianity doth not only allow, but require a rational and juſt diſlike, and *ſober cenſure* of thoſe, who entertain or countenance *evil practices*, to debauch or corrupt the lives of men, and who ſpread, promote or receive, falſe, and *unſound principles*, whereby deluded and miſguided minds forſake and depart from the truth. The meekneſs and innocency of Chriſtianity doth not engage its followers to ſuch a temper, that they may

Chriſtianity allows what is manifeſtly evil, to be condemned and blamed.

not look on any men, or party of men to be *offenders*, or to deſerve *blame*: if this were ſo, vertue and vice, and the practicers of them both, muſt have an equal eſteem and reſpect; and *judging righteouſly*, and executing judgment amongſt Chriſtians, muſt be baniſhed out of the Earth. If Religion ſhould be ſuppoſed to make it an univerſal duty, to preſerve and maintain the good *reputation* of all even *bad men*; then muſt Chriſtian charity, in a great meaſure ſuppreſs the uſe of our reaſon and conſcience, and the *reproacher* himſelf muſt not lye under any blame or diſeſteem; and men who *pervert* the truth, and corrupt the minds of others, muſt ſtill be had in *honour*. But this would be, to abuſe and *pervert the charity* and meekneſs of Chriſtianity, and to make the pretence thereof hurtful and deſtructive to the good of mankind. Yea, this would ſet up the duties of Religion to become a *cloak for wickedneſs*; and a method to keep Chriſtians from the *watchful obſerving*, and diſcerning the evil, and careful rejecting the *ſnares* of thoſe who cunningly contrive deceit, or of them who through indiſcretion and miſtake, are miſguided themſelves, and would miſlead others, and are as eager as the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* were to proſelyte men into their errors. But the true Chriſtian temper is far from obliging any to ſuch *unwary compliances* with corruptions and ſin.

The Chriſtian Rule, and the Practice guided by it, are excellent.

2. I heartily wiſh, that the behaviour of all, who call themſelves by the name of *Chriſtians*, were ſuch, that nothing could truly be ſpoken of them, but what is excellent and honourable. And thus it would be, if the *doctrine and rules* of the Chriſtian Religion, were diligently obſerved and practiſed by all who profeſs it. For ſuch is its efficacy in renewing the minds of men, where it is heartily and ſincerely embraced, that on this account, the *Chriſtian inſtitution* was anciently much *admired*, even by many who would not receive it, but oppoſed and rejected it. And as (*a*) *Euſebius* teſtifieth, the mighty influence it had on the *purity* of mens lives, was the great cauſe of its being παρὰ πᾶσι βεβοημένη, amongſt all much *ſpoken of and famed*.

(*a*) Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccl. l. 2. c. 13. gr.

Inſomuch

Insomuch that as the (*b*) same Authour tells us, the *Gnostick* brood of *Simon Magus*, would make pretensions to the Christian name. And from the same consideration of its visible effects, in purifying the lives of them who were guided thereby, it was mightily honoured, and extolled by those who did entertain it: Thus (*c*) *Clemens Alexandrinus* observed, how it greatly perfected him that is the γνωστικὸς, the truly *wise and good man*, and that it was also of great power to *correct and change*, even those who were perverse, and whose hearts were hardened. And his Scholar *Origen* noted (*d*) what a *mighty alteration*, did manifestly appear among men, by the power of the Christian Doctrine, which furnished them who embraced it, not *feignedly but sincerely*, with meekness, goodness, and such an excellent and well composed temper, as far exceeded what the practice or Philosophy of the *Gentiles* could pretend unto. And the like might be observed from *Justin Martyr*, *Lactantius*, and many others.

(*b*) ibid.

(*c*) Strom. l. 7. in init.

(*d*) Cont. Cels. l. 1. prope fin. & passim.

3. But the great *miscarriages* of too many professed Christians, both in Doctrine and Practice, are things plainly obvious and manifest. And in this case, it is nothing of *uncharitable* and passionate reproaching, which is contrary to the *example of Christ*; but an exercise of sobriety and charity, and a following his example, to war against those *hurtful evils*, which spread themselves in the world; and to speak of those *principles* which are mischievous, with dislike and detestation. For though our Lord had a great kindness for the *Jewish* Nation; yet their ill temper, and their forsaking the true guidance of the Law, made him rebuke them with sharpness, and declare against them as an *evil and crooked generation*. And if the manifest and prevailing *errors* of men, which are dangerous to others, might not be prudently *exposed*, and solidly declared against; many excellent and *famous writings* of the most eminent Fathers, against the *Gentiles*, the *Jews*, and divers Heresies and Schisms, which have hitherto been honoured and accounted useful in the Church of

To discover the evil of ill designing men and false Doctrines, is useful and good.

God, muſt now be thought fit for nothing more, than to be cenſured by an *Index expurgatorius*, or to be ranked among prohibited Books. Indeed perſons who are concerned in the guilt, are ſometimes apt to be ſo far *provoked*, at the juſt reproof and cenſure of their opinions or practices, as to cry out upon it, as if it were *reviling* or railing, or to ſpeak as the Lawyer did to our Saviour, *Luk.* 11. 45. *thus ſaying, Thou reproacheſt us alſo.* But our Lord did not think fit to deſiſt, from a free and needful *declaration* againſt evil; how unacceptable ſoever it was to the offending perſons, as appears ſufficiently from the Anſwer he returned to thoſe words, *v.* 46. And for others to do the like, is both a faithful diſcharge of *conſcience* towards God, and the performing a work, which is very uſeful, and *charitable* unto men. Thus he that gives a plain and true diſcourſe, in a time of mortality, of the nature and danger, and of the right and ſure methods of *prevention and cure*, for the diſeaſes that then reign, performs a work, which if it be made good uſe of, may *preſerve* ſome, and *recover* others from thoſe diſtempers which may otherwiſe be fatal to them. But as no diſeaſes are ſo bad, as thoſe which defile and infect the minds and ſouls of men; ſo here as (*e*) S. *Baſil* truly affirmed, τὸ κρύπτειν ἁμαρτίαν, συγκαταασκευάζειν ἐστὶ τῷ νοσοῦντι τὸν θάνατον, he that makes a *covering for ſin*, and that which is evil, makes preparation for the *death of the diſeaſed perſon.*

(*e*) Baſil. Regul. fuſ. diſp. Reſp. 46.

4. It is evident, that in the Holy Scriptures, the Prophets in the Old Teſtament, and the Apoſtles and other Officers in the Miniſtery of the New, were to *reprove* and declare againſt prevailing evils. In this caſe *Iſaiah* was commanded to *cry aloud, and lift up his voice like a trumpet, and ſhew the people their tranſgreſſions*, Iſai. 58. 1. and *Titus* was required to rebuke the *Cretians* ſharply. Sinful practices and corrupt Principles are ſuch real *blemiſhes* to thoſe that cheriſh them, that they cannot be laid open, without reflecting ſome degree of *diſparagement* upon them; even as light it ſelf brings a diſcredit to things uncomely, and repreſents the loathſomneſs of what is noyſome and de-

deformed. But there are ſome *rules* neceſſary to be obſerved, which ought to guide and govern our diſcourſe, concerning what is amiſs among men in the world. And it may be noted, that in moſt caſes, there is greater caution to be uſed, in ſpeaking of the *principles* or actions of *particular men*, as charging them therewith, than of the openly avowed evil practices, or opinions of any *party* or ſort of men, in a general conſideration of them. Becauſe the former doth more eſpecially refer to the *perſons*, towards whom we are bound to exerciſe *charity*; but the latter doth moſt directly reſpect *things*, and there is no charity due to *falſhood*, *tranſgreſſion* and ſin; and perſonal actions may be more eaſily miſapprehended and miſrepreſented, than what is publickly owned by any party. But in both theſe caſes, the difference between ſinful reproaching, and raſh and *uncharitable evil ſpeaking* on the one hand; and an uſeful and *ſober reproof* and cenſure, and declaring againſt evil on the other hand, lyeth in three things; *viz.* in the reſpect they bear, 1. To certain *truth*. 2. To *ſobriety*. 3. To *charity*.

Rules to be obſerved in ſpeaking againſt thoſe who deſerve cenſure.

5. *Firſt*, A juſt Cenſure is ever founded on certain and *evident truth*; but the reproacher oft declares that evil for truth, which is either in it ſelf *falſe*, or to him doubtful and only *ſuſpected*. But whoſo layes that to the charge of others, of which he hath no certain evidence, becomes a *falſe witneſs*. And falſe reporting, or aſſerting that againſt another as true, which is not certainly known to be ſo, is in matters of ordinary *converſation* among men, a crime much of the ſame nature, with the ſame miſcarriage of a witneſs, in a Court of *Judicature*, concerning matters of juſtice and right. For in both of theſe is contained, what (*f*) *Philo* more particularly expreſſeth of the latter; that truth which ought to be *ſacred*, and is as the *light of the Sun*, which gives a right and clear proſpect of things, is hereby violated; and things are diſguiſed in the *dark*; whereby others are miſguided into a wrong judgment, and are thence involved in a miſcarriage; and

The firſt Rule is certain truth.

(*f*) Phil. de Decal. p. 763, 764.

and *wrong* and injury is done to the perſon concerned. And whereas it is requiſite for him who attempts any thing, both to have *ſufficient knowledge* thereof, and to be a perſon of *integrity*, whoſe teſtimony deſerves credit; he who will venture to declare things as true, upon jealous ſuſpicions, doth miſcarry in both theſe, and is therefore wanting in the latter, becauſe he faileth in the former. And ſuch a perſon doth offend both againſt charity and truth.

Suſpicions on plauſible pretences not ſufficient.

6. It was part of the deſcription of thoſe evil men, 2 *Pet.* 2. 12. that they *ſpake evil of the things they underſtood not.* The venting uncertain jealouſies and ſuſpicions are oft-times of miſchievous conſequence. For they frequently *ſpread* like wildfire, and are entertained as things *certain*, upon ſlender appearances of proof; and in publick affairs, they ſometimes become dangerous, if not fatal, to *Church and State.* Nor is it ſufficient to excuſe ſuch perſons from ſin, if they proceed upon ſome ſeeming *plauſible probabilities*, which are miſtaken and miſapprehended by them. Thoſe *Jews* might ſeem to have ſome colour, for what they laid to our Saviours charge, who declared him to have ſaid, *I am able to deſtroy the Temple of God, and to build it in three dayes*, Mat. 26. 61. Yet theſe perſons miſunderſtanding or miſapplying, what he ſaid concerning the Temple of his Body, are called *falſe witneſſes*, v. 60. And therefore it becometh raſh men, who let looſe their tongues many times, upon *no greater evidence* or probability, than theſe *falſe witneſſes* had, to conſider ſeriouſly what guilt they contract upon themſelves. But the upright man is no falſe accuſer, but hath a conſcientious reſpect both to truth and charity, ſo that he tranſgreſſeth againſt neither. Our Lord blamed the *Jews* in many things, but charged them with nothing but what was certainly *true.* He called them *hypocrites*, but he fully knew their temper, and underſtood what was in man. Indeed the cenſure of *hypocriſie* is not fit for other men to make uſe of in ordinary caſes; except it be where perſons certainly manifeſt a *vicious looſeneſs* of life, and yet will ſometimes ſeem very earneſt and forward about

about purity and Religion; or where themselves shall more privately declare their *disesteem* of what they publickly appear exceeding *zealous* for. And partly by this Rule, (g) *Simon Magus* was charged with hypocritical *dissembling* a respect to Christianity.

(g) Eus. Eccl. Hist. l. 2 c. 1.

7. *Secondly*, A just censure of the practices or Principles of others, must be *soberly* managed: when oft-times the opprobrious tongue is *rash* and heady, and puts men upon running out of their *places* and stations, and out of *themselves* also. Hence some are forward to be inquisitive into the lives and behaviour of others, and to pry into them with a narrow and *curious search*, to see what they can discover to speak ill of; while in the mean time, they do not duly *reflect upon themselves*, and examine and consider their own wayes. These act against that sobriety, which Religion requires, and fall under that sharp censure of our Lord, against them who *behold the mote in their brothers eye, but not the beam in their own*, Mat, 7. 2, 3, 4, 5. And there are some who censure others by sinister judging, and *odiously representing* the intentions and designs of their words and actions, beyond what is evident. These without due reverence to God, or charity to their Neighbour; so far usurp the *place of God*, as to pass sentence on the inward thoughts, and dispositions of the minds of men, but they proceed herein, neither according to the rules of *goodness*, nor of *righteousness*. And they also offend against this Rule, who in *speaking* or *writing* against others, let loose their expressions, to gratifie their *passions*, and fierce heats, beyond what is sober and comely. I acknowledge that *sharp reproofs*, are in some cases very seasonable and proper; and some practices and Doctrines are so greatly evil, that it well becomes them who are lovers of goodness, to express a *pious indignation* and abhorrence towards them; nor is it alwayes blameable to expose some wild extravagant fancies, to the just *contempt* of others. But in an undue manner to vent expressions of *wrath* or reproach; or of scornfulness or scurrility; and

The second Rule is sobriety and a well composed temper of mind.

An angry temper to be avoided.

and to treat others with an angry and *waſpiſh temper*, and inſtead of calmneſs to raiſe a ſtorm of rage and fury; theſe things are evil in themſelves, being contrary to the meekneſs and gentleneſs of Chriſtianity, and ſavouring of the fruits of the *fleſh*, and the root of *bitterneſs*; and they are alſo very unſuitable to all ſorts of men. Such a temper is in ſeveral reſpects the worſe, in them who *defend evil*, *error*, and falſhood; becauſe they have no *juſt reaſon*, to expreſs their diſpleaſure, againſt the things they reject, or againſt the perſons with reſpect to the ill influence of their aſſertions; and what aſperſions they caſt upon the defenders of the truth, have ſome reflexion on the *truth* it ſelf; and this their behaviour ſpeaks their greater *averſeneſs* from it, and oft makes them more ſtedfaſtly *perverſe* in their error. And this method is alſo very unbecoming the defenders, of ſuch excellent things as *truth and goodneſs*; becauſe they neither need nor *approve* ſuch unworthy Artifices, in the managing their cauſe; and the uſe of ſuch things brings a *diſparagement*, and diſadvantage to the beſt cauſe; and it is moſt ſuitable to truth and goodneſs to appear like themſelves, every way *blameleſs* and unexceptionable.

and irreverence to Superiors.

8. They alſo act againſt ſobriety, and a due government of themſelves, who take upon them frowardly and irreverently to cenſure their *Superiors*, and to *defame* them; and thereby to leſſen and vilifie their reputation and Authority. Such perſons act againſt the duty of their places as *inferiours*, in which ſtate they ought out of reverence to God and his Ordinance, and out of reſpect to men alſo, to *honour* them who are over them. Yea though there may be ſome real fault, they may not make it their buſineſs to expoſe them. This was the miſcarriage of *Ham*, in his behaviour towards his Father *Noah*. And it is noted both by (*h*) S. *Ambroſe*, and by (*i*) S. *Chryſoſtome*, that *Ham* in doing this *undutiful action*, is particularly expreſſed to be the *Father of Canaan*; not only as S. *Ambroſe* ſpeaks, *ut vitio authoris deformaretur hæreditas*, that this might be a blemiſh, and *diſparagement to his poſterity*, who deſcended from him; but

(*h*) Ambr. de Noe & Arca, c. 30.
(*i*) Chryſ. Hom. in Gen. 9.

but because on this occasion of *Ham*'s irreverent disrespect to his Father; *Canaan* his Son, and his Posterity, were under a *curse*, and doomed to a state of *subjection*, Gen. 9. 25. And therefore if any men should neither have any fear of God, nor regard to themselves; if they have any respect to the *good of their posterity*, they are thereupon concerned to honour those, who are in superior relations to them.

9. The ancient *Councils* (*k*) of the Christian Church, very justly expressed great displeasure against those, who out of an ill temper, would even, undeservedly, lay things to the charge of the *Bishops and Clergy*, that they might lessen their reputation and *esteem*, and hinder the Churches peace and settlement, and promote *disturbances* therein. And such disorderly practices, though they have too much prevailed in the World, do greatly offend against very many precepts of Religion; both towards God, towards our selves, and towards others. But while the Christian Church, for *peace and order* sake, and for the sake of *piety* too, required a just honour to be preserved to its Officers; it still maintained such a care of *true goodness*, that where any of the Clergy were really faulty, it not only (*l*) allowed *regular accusations* to be orderly prosecuted against any of its Officers, but also appointed (*m*) its Censures to be *inflicted* upon them, after sufficient evidence of their offences.

(*k*) Conc. Constant. c. 6.

(*l*) ibid.

(*m*) Can. Ap. 74. Antioch. 14, 15.

10. Now our *blessed Lord*, in his sharp censures of wicked men, acted nothing but what was every way suitable for him to do. When he came into the world, Religion was strangely *defaced* amongst the *Jews*, and they who should have taken the care of it, set up very many *false doctrines*, and ill rules of practice. But our Saviour was sent, as a *great Prophet* and Teacher from God, to reform what was amiss, and to bring the world to embrace what was true and good. And therefore it was necessary for him, in the discharge of his Office, freely to declare against the evil practices of all men whomsoever, and to discover

Thus our Saviour practised.

the dangerous and hurtful errors of them, who really were *blind guides*; and to ſhew the inſufficiency of ſuch rules o practice, as made Religion a mere outward *formal thing* and gratified the hypocriſie of evil men: and in a like caſe it is well becoming any good man to do the like. And be cauſe the unbelieving *Jews*, with their *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, oppoſed the truth which he convincingly declared and maliciouſly ſet themſelves againſt him, and againſt th evidence of the mighty Miracles wrought by him; it was neceſſary that he ſhould uſe ſuch expreſſions, as ſhould declare the great evil of their wicked, obſtinate and *perverſe temper*; and the miſchief they would bring upon them who followed them. And this he did, ſometimes, in metaphorical and *repreſentative expreſſions*, as of *Wolves*, *Serpents*, *Vipers*, which was a way of ſpeaking oft uſed by the Prophets, and amongſt the *Jews* very frequently in their Writings. And that ſuch words were not accounted by them as phraſes of *reviling*, ſo much as of *expreſſive ſignificancy*, may appear from the language of the Scripture, in many places, and particularly from the bleſſings of *Jacob*, *Gen.* 49. Where the phraſes of *Woolf*, *Serpent*, *Aſs*, and *Lion's whelp*, are manifeſtly ſo uſed.

11. To this purpoſe, our Lord might well ſend a meſſage to *Herod*, under the name of *that Fox*, as an expreſſion of juſt reproof (according to the cuſtomary way of ſpeaking among the *Jews*) to him, a ſubtil and cunning man, who had the *guilt of blood* to anſwer for. Beſides other actions of cruelty, he had beheaded *John the Baptiſt*, which act, as it was greatly condemned by the *Jews*, towards ſo good a man, as (*n*) *Joſephus* relateth; ſo himſelf was ſometimes ſtricken with terrible and aſtoniſhing thoughts thereof, *Luk.* 9. 7. And that ſame *Herod* who (*o*) had *Herodias* his Brothers Wife, and (*p*) ſlew the *Baptiſt*, continued *Tetrarch* of *Galilee*, ſeveral years after our Saviours death, even till the firſt year of *Caligula*, as is declared by (*q*) *Joſephus*, and then was baniſhed. To him our Lord directed this meſſage, who alſo by reaſon of his complyance

(*n*) Ant. Jud. l. 18. c. 7.

(*o*) ibid.

(*p*) ibid.

(*q*) ibid. l. 18. c. 8, 9.

in

in the *death of our Saviour*, might in a Prophetick manner be stiled a bloody man.

12. *Thirdly*, A just declaring against the faults of others, must be tempered with *charity*. If this arise from malice, or be managed for the doing an *unkindness*, or the venting hatred or ill will, or in way of Revenge, or retaliation, it then serveth the lusts of men, and is mischievous, and therefore can be no good and lawful action: but the speaking *truth* from such a disposition, or to such ends, is an *evil action*. In such a case, what (*r*) S. *Chrysostome* resolved must be admitted for truth, that he who speaks evil of his Neighbour, is in the way of ruine, ἄντε ψεῦδη, ἄντε ἀληθῆ κακῶς εἶπε τὸν πλησίον, whether what he speaks be *false*, or whether it be *true*. There was truth, as it might be understood, in what *Shimei* said, when cursing *David*, he called him a *bloody man*, 2 Sam. 16. 7, 8. but the expression was evil, because of the *malice*, which accompanied it. Now *uncharitableness* appears in the speaking evil of others, in any of these four Cases.

The third Rule is Charity, of which there is neglect.

(*r*) Chrysost. Hom. 2. de Prophet. obscuritate.

13. *First*, Where the speaker mentions the miscarriage of others, with an *inward delight*, or pleasure in the relating it. But of this act of uncharitableness, in being pleased with that which is hurtful to men, pleasing to Satan, and offensive to God, I spake something in the (*s*) former Part, and therefore shall only mention it here.

1. when what is amiss, is spoken of with delight:

(*s*) Chap. 3.

14. *Secondly*, When he who is ready to speak against another who doth amiss, is neglectful of *praying unto God* for him. When *Samuel* declared to *Israel*, that their wickedness was great, yet he said, *God forbid, that I should sin against the Lord, in ceasing to pray for you*, 1 Sam. 12. 17. 23. And *Moses* prayed for *Israel* to turn away Gods wrath. And it is to be a rule of Christian practice, 1 Jo. 5. 16. *If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not*

2. when praying for offenders is neglected:

unto death, he ſhall ask, and he ſhall give him life for them that ſin not unto death.

3. when there is an uncharitable interpretation:

15. *Thirdly,* When the *worſt conſtructions* are put upon the words or actions of others. This I mentioned in the former Part, and therefore ſhall ſay little to it here. Where this temper prevails, the moſt *innocent* perſons may thereby be charged with guilt. Even our Lord himſelf, from a ſiniſter interpretation of his free converſe, was proclaimed a *glutton, and a drunkard.* And though there was *truth* in the information of *Doeg*, which he gave to *Saul* concerning *Ahimelech*, or at leaſt in a great part thereof, That he *enquired of the Lord* for *David*, and *gave him victuals, and gave him the ſword of Goliah*, 1 Sam. 22. 10. Yet this being expreſſed in compliance with the *ſuſpicions* of *Saul*, and (though *David* pretended to be employed by *Saul*) as an intimation that the Prieſts had *conſpired* with *David* againſt him, on which account *Doeg* was ready to ſlay them: in this ſenſe it was both miſchievous and *falſe*, Pſal. 52.

4. when any ill intention.

16. *Fourthly,* When any thing is ſpoken againſt others, with a pure intention to *prejudice*, or procure hurt to the perſons of whom they ſpeak. A bad deſign meerly to *do hurt*, as to blaſt anothers credit, and expoſe him to ſcorn or hatred, and to render him contemptible, do very ill become him who pretends to goodneſs. The *end* hath here a conſiderable influence upon the action. He that cenſureth the miſcarriages of others, in a prudent reproof to the *perſon himſelf for his amendment*; acts the part of a faithful friend, while flattery in this caſe, is a kind of *hatred*, *Lev.* 19. 17. Or if this be done to another perſon, as a *warning* to him, who is in danger to be enſnared by, or ſuffer miſchief from him; this is alſo an act of kindneſs, to prevent the doing or ſuffering evil: and of this nature is the *expoſing the miſtakes* of men, to put a ſtop to the progreſs of their errors. And theſe are the two caſes mentioned.

oned by (*d*) S. *Baſil*, in which he alloweth of the ſpeaking evil of others, when it is done for *reclaiming* the offender, or *preſerving* others. And it is alſo lawful and good, to declare againſt the evil and wicked actions of men, out of juſt *indignation*, and in order to the due puniſhment of them; as the *Levite* did concerning the lewdneſs of the *Gibeathites* towards his Concubine. For this tends to the reſtoring *good order* unto, and the *diſcountenancing* Vice in humane ſociety, and is alſo for the preſervation of others. Such proceedings are as the uſeful opening a wound, either in order to its preſent healing, or to prevent a ſpreading Gangrene, or further miſchief: whereas the ſpeaking againſt any, meerly to make them cenſured and reproached, is like the opening a wound, only to expoſe it to the Air and venemous Inſects, which is a way to make it the worſe, but to do no good.

(*d*) Baſil Regul. Brev. Reſp. 25.

17. Our Saviours ſharp reproofs give no countenance, nor allowance to any other cenſures, than thoſe which obſerve all the rules of *Chriſtian Charity*. For they were every way mixed with love and kindneſs, and wholly contrary to all theſe appearances of uncharitableneſs. He was, 1. ſo far from being *pleaſed* with any evil actions, which might expoſe his enemies to the cenſures of men, or the Judgements of God; that it was his great endeavour to *perſwade* them to goodneſs, and when they would not hearken, he was *grieved for the hardneſs of their hearts*, Mar. 3. 5. and he *wept over Jeruſalem*. 2. He *prayed* for them, even with reſpect to that their ſin againſt him, in putting him to death; wherein the greatneſs of their cruelty and malice, could ſcarce be equalled by any thing elſe, but the greatneſs of his ſufferings thereby. And though they were perverſe, he was ſtill deſirous to *bleſs them in turning every one of them from their iniquities*, Act. 3. 26. 3. He was ſo far from taking things in the *worſt ſenſe*, that he was not pleaſed with his Diſciples, who *forbad them who caſt out Devils* in his *name*, *becauſe they followed* not them; and thereby he expreſſed a kind *approbation* of them, towards

Our Saviours juſt reproofs give no encouragement to diſorderly expreſſions.

wards whom his Diſciples were harſh and ſevere. 4. He did not intend any *prejudice* to the worſt of men, but their *greateſt good.* He came *not to condemn the world, but that it might be ſaved.* And amidſt his kind reproofs and rebukes, *how oft would he have gathered Jeruſalem,* and how much did he deſire, that they might have *known the things, which belonged unto their peace?* And ſuch prudently managed (*e*) reproof, and even the ἐνειδισμὸς, or diſcreet upbraiding with the ſhamefulneſs of a miſcarriage, is medicinal to heal the diſtempers and diſorders of the ſoul, and tends εἰς ἄϊδιον ὑγίειαν, to its *everlaſting health.*

(*e*) Cl. Alex. Pædag. l. 1. c. 8.

In Reproaches and uncharitable Cenſures, 1. *He that ſpreads them is guilty, as well as the firſt Authour,*

18. But whoſoever offend againſt the forementioned Rules, their ſpeaking againſt others, thereby becomes chargeable with ſin; nor can it be *palliated* by ſuch vain methods, as men ſometimes make uſe of; as, *Firſt,* Though he be not the *firſt authour* of a calumny. For he that raſhly *ſpreads abroad* a ſlander, which he receives from another, is as well guilty, and ſometimes to as high a degree, as the firſt authour of it: ſince his act may in many caſes, be as *much injurious* to the perſon ſlandered; and his *uncharitable intentions* may be as bad, and ſometimes worſe, and he is as much obliged to know the *truth* of what he uttereth. In a publick *flame,* kindled and fomented by wicked deſigns, he that brings fire from one houſe to burn another, is as really miſchievous, as he that ſet the firſt houſe on fire. The *Pſalmiſt* requires of the pious man, or of him who would obtain the favour of God, that he *take not up a reproach againſt his Neighbour,* Pſal. 15. 3. And it was one of the wicked practices of *Sanballat,* to abuſe and diſcourage *Nehemiah,* by publiſhing, upon the credit and report of one of his Companions, that *Nehemiah purpoſed to rebel*; nor did it excuſe him that he alledged his Authour, that *Gaſhmu ſaid it,* Neh. 6. 6.

2. *and he who only ſlely inſinuates them,*

19. *Secondly,* Though he doth not poſitively *averr* the fault, or crime of which he diſcourſeth; but only *inſinuate* it by reflective intimations, or repreſent it as a thing proba-

probable, or what ſome believe. For if it be conſidered, how prone men are to entertain bad thoughts of others, eſpecially if upon account of *parties* or *opinions*, they have any prejudice againſt them, it may be thence diſcerned, that this way, amongſt ſuch biaſſed and *credulous men*, is ſufficient to propagate and ſpread ſuch things, as are hurtful and uncharitable. But the prudent and good man is one, whoſe *angry countenance* (as the wiſe man ſpeaketh) *driveth away a back-biting tongue*, Prov. 25. 23. *Thirdly*, though his words be not *fierce and furious*, but gentle and ſmooth, and ſuch as expreſs a kindneſs and reſpect to the perſon of whom he ſpeaks: and poſſibly when he intimates any ill of another, it is with expreſſions of his being *ſorry* for it, and that he *wiſheth* it were otherwiſe. For if the things in this manner related, do offend againſt the Rules above mentioned, ſuch ſoft and oily words, make the ſlander to be ſwallowed down more glibly, and there is the leſs ſuſpicion, either of *ill intention*, or of *falſhood* in him who ſpeaks with ſo much appearance of kindneſs. But this may on theſe accounts, become the more *dangerous way* of doing miſchief: even as Poiſon may be moſt readily received, in a pleaſant vehicle, and from the hand of a ſuppoſed Friend, and may then as effectually do its work, as if it had been taken in any other way.

3. *and he who carries fair appearances of friendlineſs.*

20. But where the Rules which I above laid down, are carefully regarded, they who eſpouſe evil actions, or who patronize corrupt Doctrines or Practices, may be lawfully and uſefully *declared againſt*, and blamed, by good men, with prudence and ſobriety. And their undertakings may be juſtly diſcredited, and their *reputation* may in a due and right manner be leſſened, for the *preventing* the growth of that evil they are carrying on; and if it may be, for the *reducing* themſelves, and working them to repentance. But I am very ſenſible, that it is a truth of ſad conſideration, that it is more *difficult* and more unuſual for men, though they ſeem *zealous* for God and Religion, when they have entertained ſuch falſe notions and opinions,

There is in too many, juſt reaſon of Cenſure and blame.

as

as are very pernicious to the Church of God, to be reclaimed from them, or from doing miſchief by them, than it is for lewd and *debauched* perſons to be convinced, and become converts. Hence the Doctrine of our Saviour found leſs ſucceſs, among the *Scribes and Phariſees*, than amongſt the *Publicans* and Sinners, or in the *Gentile* World. But a good undertaking is not to be laid aſide, becauſe of the difficulty of effecting it, but it becomes us to do our beſt to promote it, whatſoever the iſſue ſhall be. Nor will ſuch endeavours, though fruſtrated by men, loſe their acceptance with God, and their *reward* from him, if they be faithfully and piouſly managed; as the Prophet *Eſay* declared even with reſpect to our bleſſed Saviour himſelf, *Iſai.* 49. 4, 5. though *Iſrael* was not gathered.

from vicious actions and practices.

21. That *vicious actions* and a wicked life, bring ſhame and diſgrace to the practiſers, or in *Solomon*'s phraſe, that *ſin is a reproach to any people*, Prov. 14. 34. is very obvious to common Principles of Reaſon and Conſcience; ſince the generality of mankind are ſenſible, that (*f*) ἐπαινετὰ ἐστὶ τὰ καλὰ, ψεκτὰ δὲ τὰ αἰσχρὰ, good and *vertuous things* are to be commended, but filthy and *vicious things* to be diſpraiſed. And though goodneſs is too oft in practice reproached, and diſparaged in the world, there is a vaſt difference, between the *cenſure*, an upright and truly pious man undergoes in well doing, and the ill report and infamy which is conſequent upon evil doing. For the truly good man knows, that what cenſure he lies under, for his piety and integrity, is ſometimes from mens ſpeaking againſt their own *conſciences*, or at beſt from their miſtakes, and *miſapprehenſions*; and his conſcience ſpeaks peace to him, and he knows that God both *approves* his ſincerity, and howſoever he is miſunderſtood by men, will *reward* him. But if the evil man be ſpoken againſt, his conſcience doth or may teſtifie, that this is no more than he *juſtly deſerves*; and that he muſt expect (without timely repentance) more hurt from his *ſin*, than from the *infamy* that followeth it; and that if his evil wayes make him juſtly diſapproved and con-

(*f*) Ariſt. de Virtut. & vitiis.

condemned of men, it will make him more *odious* in the ſight of God, and the Holy Angels, and will expoſe him to a more ſevere ſentence and condemnation, from the *righteous Judge* of the World.

and from corrupt Principles and Doctrines.

22. And that the *patrons of error*, whoſe evil Principles tend to corrupt Religion, and debauch the world, ſhould be declared againſt, and the danger and deteſtableneſs of their undertakings be manifeſted, is a thing as *uſeful* and needful, as it would be to detect and diſcover him, who is contriving felony, murder or any publick miſchief. On this account did our Saviour cenſure and condemn the Doctrines of the *Scribes and Phariſees*, and ſpake to the diſparagement of their reputation; and commanded, *Matt.* 7. 15. to *beware of falſe Prophets, who come in ſheeps cloathing, but inwardly are ravening Wolves.* And the true Apoſtles made a plain diſcovery of the *falſe Apoſtles*, and corrupt workers, though this laid them open to reproach. And S. *Paul* withſtood even S. *Peter*, and ſpake againſt him openly, in that wherein he *was to be blamed*, Gal. 2. 14. when his own behaviour, and what he encouraged others unto, was of ill conſequence, and contrary to the true *ſpirit of the Goſpel*, though himſelf was ſo excellent a man, that he was far from adviſedly managing any ill deſign. Indeed all dangerous errors are not of equal degree of guilt, but ſome are *more heinous* than others: but the meekneſs of Chriſtianity obligeth no pious man, to a compliance with any of them, though the worſt are more earneſtly to be rejected.

Primitive zeal in this caſe noted.

23. S. *John* who ſo vehemently and abundantly, preſſed the duty of *Chriſtian love* in his Epiſtle; and ſo fully declared the ſame, to be the neceſſary Doctrine of Chriſt, in his Goſpel, and who in his extreme age, when he was not able to make any long diſcourſes, is (*g*) related, to have come into the Chriſtian Aſſemblies, and oft to have ſpoken theſe words, *Little children, love one another*; yet as (*h*) *Irenæus* tells us, he declared himſelf with that earneſtneſs againſt *Cerinthus*, a Maſter of Hereſie, that when he came

(*g*) Hieron. Comment in Gal. l. 3.

(*h*) adv. Hæreſ. l. 3. c. 3.

to the *Bath* where S. *John* was, he leap'd out of it, and declared his fear of the place falling upon them, when that *enemy of the truth* was there. And from the like Spirit of Primitive zealous earneſtneſs, (*i*) when *Marcion* meeting with *Polycarp*, an *Apoſtolical man*, a Diſciple of S. *John*, and one who was, *ab Apoſtolis conſtitutus Epiſcopus*, *Ordained a Biſhop by the Apoſtles*, and *Marcion* deſired him to take knowledge of him, *Polycarp* anſwers him, *cognoſco te primogenitum Satanæ*, *I know and own thee to be the firſt-born of Satan.* And all the firſt and pureſt Churches expreſſed vehement diſlike, againſt all *Hereticks*, and *dividers* of the Church. And (*k*) S. *Cyprian* when he ſpake of *Novatianus*, with reſpect to the *Novatian* Schiſm, ſaith, that *inter adverſarios & antichriſtos computetur*, he was to be reckoned among the *adverſaries* to Chriſtianity, and the *Antichriſts*. And this is ſufficient to ſhew (which may be more largely and amply proved, beyond all contradiction) that earneſt oppoſitions, againſt them who forſake the *Catholick truth*, or who *divide* the Church, was not, as ſome very falſly pretend, firſt brought into the Chriſtian Church, by the unadviſed and indiſcreet raſhneſs, of ſome Canons and Councils, after the firſt Centuries, who are ſaid herein to have ſwerved from the true Spirit of *Catholick Charity*.

(*i*) Iren. ibid.

(*k*) Cyp. Ep. 76.

Hartful errors are too much prevailing.

24. And it is a thing too plain to be denied, that in this age, divers perſons and parties entertain thoſe errors and *corruptions* in matters of Religion, which deſerve to be ſharply cenſured and ſpoken againſt. 'Tis generally known, that the ſeveral parties, and different profeſſions, do condemn one another; and it may well become them to conſider, whether they have *ſufficient ground*, for the Cenſures they paſs on others, and whether they proceed therein in a due *Chriſtian temper* of Spirit, and alſo whether there be not any juſt foundation, for the *blame* themſelves meet with from others. Wherefore I ſhall make ſome impartial enquiry into ſome of the ſeveral parties of men, who divide the profeſſion of Chriſtian Religion. And ſince they who ſtrictly adhere to the *Church of Rome*, lie under

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an infamous character from others, I shall first enquire, whether they may not be justly accused, of such things as deserve great condemnation and censure. And since the *dissenting* parties are spoken ill of by others, I shall 2. Enquire, whether they be not guilty of that, which is sufficient cause of blame. And if any of these several parties be no further spoken against, than they deserve blame, and this be also ordered according to the Christian Rules, I delivered above, this is not a *sinful reproaching*, but a judging righteously and according to truth.

An account of the things discoursed of in the following Chapters.

25. And I here seriously profess, that there is no duty I esteem my self more obliged to practise, than to have an *universal kindness* to all men. And therefore I shall be so far, from willingly charging any sort of men, with what they are not guilty of, that while I write some account of things blameable, among several parties of men, it is with a mixture of *hearty sorrow*, that so much evil should prevail in the world, and that so many persons (divers of whom intend well) should be led away thereby. And I *humbly beseech Almighty God*, of his mercy and goodness, to bless and give good success to all those labours, which are undertaken to guide men, into the right wayes of truth and peace.

26. I know that many men account him to be *wanting in kindness*, and love to others, who undertakes to lay open their mistakes and miscarriages, how sincere and beneficial soever his intentions be, yea though this be managed with the greatest *tenderness and prudence*: (even as indiscreet Children have hard and unkind apprehensions of him, who openeth their sores, though it be for their cure) and such a person with many men, shall rather be ranked amongst *revilers and reproachers*, than amongst the number of *Friends*. And they account that to be kindness and love, when any one is ready to speak in *favour* of them and their actions, and will take care to hide their faults and errors, whensoever he discerns them. And this kind of behaviour is indeed in a due measure an Office of *charity* in the

The nature of true kindness, and love to men under mistakes and error.

caſe of *private failings*, where the offender is ſufficiently ſenſible of his miſcarriage, and affected with it. But it is much otherwiſe, where things that deſerve blame are publickly declared and profeſſed, and are juſtified and vindicated; or indeed where they are kept more private, but without any *penitent reſentment* of them. Yet theſe caſes fall under different Rules and conſiderations. If this were *true kindneſs* (as it cannot be) towards men who themſelves do amiſs, and by their examples and perſwaſions, would engage others to do the like, to flatter and complement them, and to encourage them, that they do well to continue in thoſe practices, which are their errors and miſcarriages; then muſt our *grand adverſary* the Devil, be looked on as our kind friend, who is very forward to ſooth men in their faults, and to perſwade and intice them, into a reſolved continuance in them; and to ſhut their ears, and open their mouths, againſt thoſe who would adviſe them better. But this is true Chriſtian kindneſs, *love and goodneſs*, to follow the example of our Lord, and to ſet our ſelves to do good, and to preſerve or reduce others from evil, though in ſo doing, we expoſe our ſelves to the cenſure and diſpleaſure of bad men, or of them who are miſguided.

CHAP.

Sect. I.

CHAP. II.

The Principles *and* Practices, *maintained in the Church of* Rome, *are such as deserve severe Censure and a note of infamy.*

SECT. I.

The Romish Church *and its Doctrines, and the putting them in practice, is chargeable with great disturbances, mischievous to the* peace *and order of the World.*

1. IN this Chapter I shall enquire, whether the *Church of Rome* and the Members thereof, who practise upon the Principles they are there taught, be not chargeable with things really very evil, and infamous, and which deserve to be greatly condemned. In this discourse I shall not intend to take notice of all the considerable errors in *doctrine and practice*, which are owned and espoused in that Church. But I shall instance in so many, as may be sufficient to satisfie any unprejudiced and impartial Reader, of the great corruption of that Church, and how hurtful and dangerous it is to be guided by it. I acknowledge there hath been so much said already, and so largely and plainly proved, by divers *Protestant Writers*, and by many of our own Church, and particularly by many learned and worthy Discourses of Dr. *Stillingfleet*, in this Controversie of late years, that I do not pretend (nor need I) to add much that is material and considerable, to what they have written, nor indeed to say so much as they have done, upon those

The bad Principles and practices owned in the Church of Rome.

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thoſe Arguments of which I ſhall diſcourſe. But yet I think, ſuch Remarks as I ſhall make, may be of ſo much uſe to ſome perſons, as to give them a ſatisfactory account, how neceſſary it is to avoid the *Romiſh* groſs Errors.

Several Heads of theſe propoſed.

2. And what I ſhall here conſider I ſhall reduce unto five Heads. *First*, to give ſome inſtances of the *principles* and allowed practices of *ſedition*, and diſturbance, againſt the *peace* and good order of the *Church*, and of the *world*; and the violation of the *rights* both of ſecular Rulers, and of other Churches and Biſhops. *Secondly*, Of ſuch things as are plain obſtacles, and hindrances to an *holy life*. *Thirdly*, Of thoſe practices and opinions, which derogate from the *dignity*, and authority of our *Saviour*. *Fourthly*, Of ſome things which debaſe the *Majeſty of God*, and deprive him of that glory and worſhip, which is due unto him. *Fifthly*, Of ſuch things as repreſent *Religion*, and the Doctrines thereof, as a thing contrived or ordered, to ſerve the intereſts of *worldly deſigns* or human Policy. And in treating of the ſeveral inſtances I ſhall give, I deſire my Reader to obſerve, that ſince I uſe theſe Heads in part for Method and Order ſake, that which is to be conſidered in them, is not only, how aptly they are digeſted, under theſe ſeveral heads (though I think that is ſufficiently clear) but eſpecially, whether they do not manifeſtly contain, what is falſe, evil and oppoſite to Chriſtianity. And therefore it may be further noted, that ſeveral things which I ſhall treat of, are upon *other accounts alſo evil and blameable*, beſides the reſpect they bear to thoſe particular Heads under which I do digeſt them.

Obſerv. 1. *Popiſh Principles oppoſite to peace and due order.*

3. *First*, I ſhall enquire into the *principles*, and allowed practices of *ſedition* and diſturbance, againſt peace and good order of the Church and the world. Here I ſhall not need to prove, that true Religion and the Chriſtian temper, greatly promotes *peaceableneſs*, and eſtabliſheth *juſtice* and righteouſneſs in the earth. And that the doing *wrong* and injury,

injury, the profecuting unjuſt claims, and *invading* the rights and properties of others; as alſo the embroiling any part of the World in diſcord and confuſion, in *wars and tumults*, and in Sedition and Rebellion, is exceeding contrary to our holy Religion. For the true principles of Morality, and the *light of nature*, will direct men who are not influenced by intereſt and paſſion, to condemn and deteſt ſuch things as theſe. Wherefore taking this for granted, I ſhall in the firſt place reflect on the injurious demeanour of them at *Rome* towards *ſecular Princes*, in claiming to the *Romiſh* Biſhop, an *univerſal Soveraignty* over Kings and Princes, with a Power to depoſe them, and diſpoſe of their Kingdoms. That the Pope makes, (and hath oft acted upon) this claim of *Sovereign Supremacy*, I have ſhewed (*a*) in another Treatiſe. And that the power of *depoſing Kings*, is owned as a *Doctrine of the Romiſh Church*, I have given alſo (*b*) ſufficient evidence; and the ſame hath been done at large by others. The *Romiſh* claim is like that of the Tempter, who, concerning the Kingdoms of the World, and the glory of them, ſaid, *Luk.* 4. 5, 6. *All this is delivered unto me, and to whomſoever I will, I give it*; and it hath alſo a parallel title, which bears it ſelf up, upon confident *uſurpation*, vain boaſting, and *falſe pretentes*. Yet they who are thorough Papiſts muſt acknowledge this.

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(*a*) Chriſt. Loyalty B. 1. ch. 6. Sec. 2.
(*b*) B. 2. ch. 1. Sec. 1. n. 4, &c.

4. Some Writers indeed of that Communion, deny the Pope any power over Princes in *things temporal*: but beſides the Cenſure they generally undergo, from their own party, they are put to hard ſhifts, when they undertake to reconcile their Aſſertions, with the publickly received *Conſtitutions of that Church*. For inſtance ſake, I ſhall take notice of the Council of (*c*) *Laterane* (concerning which they have as fair and plauſible a plea, as for any other thing) which declares, that the Pope may give the Country of a *temporal Lord* to Catholicks, if he neglect to purge his Country of *Hereticks*. Here it is firſt pretended, that this was not declared by that *General Council*, but only by Pope *Innocent* III. after it was broken up, and that there were

(*c*) Concil Lateran. c. de hæret.

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were no Conſtitutions or Canons, made in that Council. And yet in the *Decretalia* of *Gregory* the Ninth, who was Pope about twelve years after that Council, this very Conſtitution is inſerted into the (*d*) Canon Law as being eſtabliſhed by *Innocentius in a General Council.* And from the Authority of that Council, *Tranſubſtantiation* hath been ever ſince acknowledged, to be a declared Doctrine of the *Roman* Church. And what goes under the name of this Council, is acknowledged to have the Authority of a *General Council*, both by the Council of *Conſtance* and by that of *Trent*, as hath been obſerved by the (*e*) Biſhop of *Lincoln.*

(*d*) Decret. l. 5. Tit. 7. c 13. Excommunicamus.

(*e*) Of Popery p. 48---51.

5. But it is further ſaid by them, that the Canon of *Lateran*, concerneth (*f*) not *Sovereign Princes*, but only ſome *feudatory Lords*, in *Italy*, and ſome parts of the Empire. And whereas this ſenſe ſeems plainly contradicted, by the laſt clauſe of that Conſtitution, *eadem ſervata lege circa eos qui non habent dominos principales*, that the ſame Law ſhould be obſerved concerning them *who have no Chief Lords over them*; they note, that there is an (*g*) Imperial Law, eſtabliſhed by *Frederick* the Second, much to the ſame purpoſe with this Canon, to make void the *rights of ſuch Lords*, as purge not their Lands from *Hereticks*, and that therein this clauſe is annexed, that *this* ſame *Law ſhall be obſerved againſt them who have no Chief Lords.* But ſay they, it cannot be ſuppoſed, that the Emperour would enact a Law, which might make void his own Imperial Dignity, and forfeit his Empire. Now in this Conſtitution of *Frederick*, there is no expreſs mention, of any right of *diſpoſing Dominions*, devolving it ſelf upon the *Biſhop of Rome*; but it may be conſidered, how much this Emperours intereſt, and that of the Church and See of *Rome*, were at this time linked together. For his poſſeſſion of the *Empire*, much depended on the *Popes authority*; for (*h*) *Innocent* the Third, having excommunicated and depoſed *Otho* the Emperour, ſome of the Princes fix their thoughts upon *Frederick*, to advance him to the Empire; and the Pope cloſeth with this

(*f*) Shel. Idons Reaſons for Allegiance, p. 41.

(*g*) Conſtit. Frederici, n. 7

(*h*) Mar. Polon in Oth. p. 394, 395. Urſperg. p. 326, 327. Avent. Ann. Boio. l. 7. p. 519.

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this design, and encourageth both him and them. And therefore this clause, concerning the advancing the interest of the *Church*, and the forfeiture of *Sovereign Dominion* (of what force or validity soever it be) both tended to assert *Fredericks* own right, and jointly to gratifie the *Romish* See. And this Law was confirmed by him, in compliance with the Pope (*i*) on that very day, in which he received his *Imperial Diadem*, from *Honorius* the Third, who succeeded *Innocentius*. And this Law was highly applauded by *Honorius*, and *ratified* (*k*) by him with a severe Curse, against them who should act any thing against it, and was again confirmed by *Boniface* the Eighth, and seems to be framed by the Popes order, from this clause in the Preface, *Cum nihil velit Ecclesia quod nobis eâdem non placeat voluntate.*

(*i*) Constit. Fred. in Præf.

(*k*) ibid. in fin.

6. And yet if this were true, that the *Doctrine of their Church* gives the Pope power of disposing, only, of *such Principalities* which belong to inferiour and dependent Lords; this would afford but little security to the greatest Princes, if the *Romish* Bishop be still allowed to *judge* in this case. For the most *imperious Popes* have oft very plainly declared the *Secular authority* of the highest Princes, to be *derived* from them, and to depend upon them. And the collection of Sacred Ceremonies, contains such things concerning *Emperours and Kings*, as when occasion serves, may be made use of to infer subjection and dependance. Thus we are told (*l*) that the elected Emperour must implore the favour of the Apostolical See, and offer himself, *ad quæcunque fidelitatis juramenta Romanæ Ecclesiæ præstanda*, to *take any Oaths of Fealty to the Church of* Rome: and must humbly desire Unction, Consecration, and the Imperial Diadem. And the Pope after examination of the Election, and considering the fitness of the Person, doth grant him his grace and favour, and doth *eum nominare, denunciare, assumere & declarare Regem Romanorum, Nominate, authoritatively pronounce, receive and declare him to be King of the* Romans, and *to be fit and sufficient*

Emperours and Kings must be submissive to the Pope.

(*l*) Sacr. Cerem. l. 1. Sect. 3. c. 1.

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ent to receive the Imperial Dignity. And in this manner it is there ſaid, that divers Emperours have addreſſed themſelves to the Pope, ſome of which are there particularly named. And if any King ſhall come to *Rome*, (*m*) after the firſt day of his being there, he is to carry the *Popes train*, and to pour out *water* for his hands, and to carry up the *firſt Diſh* to his Table, and ſerve the *firſt Cup* in other Collations: which things, with others mentioned in the ſame Book, carry in them fair appearances *of doing homage*. And ſome of the *Romiſh* Biſhops, which have ſomewhat more than others, complemented Secular Authority, in ſome of their *notions*, have yet in their *practice* acted as much againſt them, as any others. So did *Innocent* the Third, who acknowledged, (*n*) *Rex ſuperiorem in temporalibus minime recognoſcit*, that a King is to own *no Superiour in temporals*; and therefore ſpeaking of his own Authority, beſides what he had within the Patrimony of the Church, he ſaith, *In other Regions, upon the inſpection into ſome certain cauſes, temporalem juriſdictionem caſualiter exercemus, we caſually exerciſe temporal juriſdiction.* And yet this is he, who declared that Canon above mentioned, in the Council of *Lateran*; and practiſed the power of depoſing, in *Germany*, and in other places, even in *England* againſt King *John*.

(*m*) l. 1. Sect. 13. c. 2. f. 132.

(*n*) Decretal. l. 4. Tit. 17. c. 13 Pervenerabilem.

Papal claims have been miſchievous:

7. Concerning *this claim* of Papal Soveraignty, and the depoſing power, I ſhall obſerve three things. *Firſt*, That it hath been very *miſchievous* to the Chriſtian World, and hath been the cauſe of many Wars and *inteſtine broils*, eſpecially in *Germany* and *Italy*: and hence hath proceeded very much blood-ſhed, and very many *rebellions*. When (*o*) *Gregory* the Seventh, and then (*p*) *Urbane* the Second, and *Paſchalis* the Second, had undertaken to excommunicate *Henry* the Fourth the Emperour, and to depoſe him, and declare againſt his Subjects paying him any *allegeance*, firſt *Rodolphus* of *Saxony* was ſet up againſt him, who periſhed in his undertaking: after which *Henry* the Fifth his

(*o*) Mar. Pol. in Hen. p. 358.
(*p*) Urſperg. ad an. 1102.

his own Son, engages in that (q) *Parricidale bellum*, as *Urſpergenſis* calls it, to fight againſt his own Father and Soveraign. And in the time of divers ſucceeding Emperours, there were frequent depoſings, and thereupon *Civil Wars*, and almoſt continual broils; hence aroſe the long remaining high animoſities, and fierce conteſts, in *Italy*, and ſome adjacent parts of the Empire, between the faction of the *Guelphs*, who adhered to the Pope; and the *Gibelines*, who cloſed with the Emperour. In this period of time, for many ages, ſometimes the *Emperour*, and ſometimes the *Pope*, were taken Priſoners, or forced to eſcape by flight, and reduced to great extremities; and the Countries in the mean time were miſerably *harraſſed*, which were the Seat of theſe Wars. And in theſe, foreign Princes were frequently engaged, ſome on the one ſide, and ſome on the other, even ſo far, as ſometimes to take in, both the *Engliſh* and *French*. The particulars of theſe things, or the effects of the like proceedings in ſome other Kingdoms, would be too large to be here inſerted. And beſides theſe things, divers *ſecret Conſpiracies*, of Subjects, againſt the lives of their Princes, have been the effect of theſe *Romiſh Principles*, in contradiction to that honour and reverence, which Chriſtianity requireth to be given to them. Nor have ſuch evil attempts been made, only, upon the lives of *Proteſtant Princes*, but of ſuch alſo, who have adhered to the *Romiſh profeſſion*, both before and ſince the Reformation.

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(q) Urſp. p. 257, 261.

8. But I ſhall here take notice, that even thoſe perſons who were *ſet up*, in proſecuting this depoſing power, where it did take effect (as very often even before the Reformation it was of no force) beſides other troubles, they were engaged in, they oft fell themſelves, under the like *Sentence* of the Biſhop of *Rome*, and ſometimes into great calamities thereby. Here I might inſtance, in thoſe two I lately mentioned. The Emperour *Henry* the Fifth, who roſe up againſt his Father (againſt whom the Biſhop of *Rome* had declared his Sentence of *depoſition* did prevail a-

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gainſt him, and took him Priſoner; but behaved himſelf very unworthily towards him, and kept him in Priſon till he died, and Reigned after him. But he himſelf fell under the *ſentence of Paſchalis* the Second, and was involved in War thereby, but he overcame the Pope, and took him *priſoner*: But he died *Childleſs*, having no Iſſue to ſucceed him in the Empire, which was then Hereditary; (*r*) and this was by many in that age, accounted Gods *juſt judgement* upon him, who had acted ſo unchriſtianly and undutifully againſt his Father. And after his death the Empire came to the *Saxon line*.

(r) M. Pol. p. 367, 368.

9. But I ſhall particularly take notice of *Frederick the Second*, who was ſubſtituted Emperour, in the place of *Otho*, who was depoſed. He made many Laws in favour of the Church, and encreaſed its wealth and revenue, and was, (*ſ*) as Hiſtorians relate concerning him, an *excellent*, moſt *wiſe* and *flouriſhing Prince*. Yet he was both excommunicated and (*t*) *depoſed*, by *Honorius* who had Crowned him. And this Sentence was again renewed by *Gregory* the Ninth, who ſucceeded *Honorius*, in three ſeveral Bulls of depoſition: (*u*) In the firſt of theſe, in the courtſhip of *Rome*, he declared the Emperour to be a *Beaſt*, and in the laſt of them to be an Heretick: but whatever great words were uſed, (*) *Urſpergenſis*, who was an Abbot at that very time, declared that it was, *pro frivolis cauſis & falſis*, upon trifling and untrue grounds and occaſions. And againſt this *Frederick* did *Innocent* the Fourth erect the Banner of the Croſs as againſt the *Turk*, and denounce the Sentence of depoſition in the Council of *Lions*, to the aſtoniſhing terror of them who heard it. Amidſt theſe Circumſtances, his own Son *Henry*, whom he had deſigned his *Succeſſor*, and had declared him ſo, roſe up in rebellion againſt his Father, and being condemned of *parricide*, by (*x*) the Sentence of ſeventy Princes, was impriſoned, and not long after died in *Sicily*. And when *Frederick* had encountred with various *difficulties*, after his flight into (*y*) *Apulia*, he there died in diſtreſs and miſery. And this was the

(ſ) Avent. l. 7. p. 525, 535. Nic. de Cuſa.

(t) M. Pol. in Honor. & in Fred.

(u) Avent. P. 537, 538.

(*) Chron. Urſperg. p. 337.

(x) Avent. P. 533.

(y) M. Pol. p. 399. In Fred.

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kind requital he met with, for his affection to the Pope, and interesting himself in his quarrel, against the preceding Emperour.

10. *Secondly*, I observe that the *pretended pleas* for this Papal power, are very vain. Many of these, and the most considerable I have examined (z) otherwhere. But here I shall take notice of some things, urged by *Innocent* the Third, in a *decretal Epistle*, which hath been confirmed by *Gregory* the Ninth, and other *Romish* Bishops since. And it is strange to see, how extravagantly impertinent these proofs are. For an evidence of the Popes chief *decisive power*, in the highest matters of right, he referreth to *Deut.* 17. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. *If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgement,——thou shalt get thee to the place, which the Lord thy God shall chuse. And thou shalt come unto the Priests the Levites, and unto the Judge,——And thou shalt do according to the Sentence, which they of that place shall shew thee.* And then he tells us, (a) *quia Deuteronomium lex secunda interpretetur*, that because the word *Deuteronomy*, signifieth a *Second Law*, it is thence proved, that what is there determined, must be observed in the time of the New Testament; and the Apostolical See, is the *place which God chuseth*. Now the proof is much alike, that *Rome* is the place which God chuseth under the New Testament; as he chose *Jerusalem* under a great part of the Old Testament; and that all that is in the Book of *Deuteronomy*, continues established under the Gospel. And it may be wondered, that such a thing should be affirmed, if it were not to *impose* on others; when the Book of *Deuteronomy* contains many things, concerning the *Aaronical Sacrifices*, and other *Jewish Feasts*: and in that, is that particular permission of *divorce*, which our Saviour will not allow of under the Gospel. *Deut.* 24. 1. *Mat.* 19. 8, 9. and a repetition of many *Mosaical* Laws, whence it was called by the *Greek* Translators *Deuteronomy*.

(z) Christ. Loyalty, B. 1. ch. 6. & B. 2. ch. 1. Sect. 1. Observ. 2. *The vain pleas for Papal power.*

(a) 3. Decretal. 14. Tit. 17. c. 13.

What is urged by Innocentius *the Third, hath no infallible evidence.*

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11. In the ſame Epiſtle, as a proof of this plenary and *ſupreme power* ſeated in the Pope, he produceth what S. *Paul* writeth to the *Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 6. 3. and tells us that *Paul, that he might expound the plenitude of power*, writing to the *Corinthians*, ſaith, *Neſcitis quoniam Angelos judicabitis, quanto magis ſecularia? Know ye not that ye ſhall judge Angels, how much more the things of this life, or things ſecular?* But what the Apoſtle wrote in that Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, bid directly concern the Church of *Corinth*. And therefore if he had diſcourſed of a *plenitude of power*, (or the higheſt univerſal Authority over all the parts of the World, or the Church) as he did not, it would appear from this place, to be as much, if not more fixed in S. *Paul*, and the Church of *Corinth*, as any where elſe; and it muſt needs be hard to prove, that S. *Paul* in theſe words, declared a plenitude of power in the Biſhop of *Rome*, both over *Corinth* and all the World, when he ſaid, *Know ye not that we ſhall judge*, &c.

What light the two great Luminaries give to the Popes power.

12. But that proof which paſſeth all the reſt, which is urged in the ſame decretal Epiſtle, is, from Gods making *two great Luminaries*, the greater to rule the day, and the leſſer to rule the night; from whence it is there inferred, that the power of the Biſhop of *Rome*, is as much above all Secular power, as the *Sun is above the Moon*. And it may be alſo hence collected, that the Imperial power is *derived* from the Papal, as was declared hence by (*b*) *Boniface* the Eighth. Now from hence it may appear, that a pretended teſtimony from the firſt Chapter of *Geneſis*, may be as effectual (though it be nothing to the purpoſe) as if it had been taken out of the Book of *Deuteronomy*. And this is ſuch a wonderful Argument, that ſo far as the ſtrength of it will reach, it will not only prove the higheſt power of the Biſhop of *Rome*, to be ordained of God, before the *coming of Chriſt*, and even before any *promiſe* made concerning the *Meſſias*, and before the fall of man, but that this was eſtabliſhed before *Adam was created*, and was one of the principal things done in the framing and making of the

(*b*) v. Addit. ad P. de Marc. de Conc. S. & Imp. l. 2. c. 3.

the World. And therefore if this authority be rightly applied, it is indeed an early teſtimony of the *greateſt antiquity* of this power in the Church of *Rome*, and deriveth its original much higher, than moſt men have been aware of, and it confutes the great miſtake of thoſe *Noveliſts*, who pretend it to be founded in any *eminency of authority*, conveyed unto S. *Peter*, when it was ſo clearly ingraved upon the brightneſs of the *Sun beams* (but not to be ſeen by mens eyes) in the firſt ſpringing forth of their light. Sect. I.

13. Such things as theſe are ſo trifling and frivolous, that they deſerve not any ſerious conſideration or anſwer. And it can ſcarce be imagined, that they who laid down *theſe teſtimonies*, as a foundation to ſupport the Papal power, could have any other deſign, than to *delude*, and impoſe upon the great ignorance of the World. And if it be a wicked and abominable thing, for any private man to *forge an evidence* for an Eſtate, or to counterfeit the Kings *broad Seal*, to ſerve his intereſt; it is far worſe to deſign to deal falſly in that which hath reſpect to the authority of the *ſacred Majeſty of God*, and to the greateſt rights of men, and the *publick intereſt* and peace of the World. And I think no men ever ſpake more wildly about theſe things, than the Popes themſelves have done, the *extravagancy of their pleas*, bearing an equal proportion to that of their *claims*.

14. *Thirdly*, I obſerve, that the pretence of this high Papal power, which for ſome hundred years hath been of ill conſequence to Chriſtian Kingdoms, hath this manifeſt mark of an *encroachment*, uſurpation and innovation, in that the more *ancient Biſhops of Rome*, never knew any thing thereof, but did profeſs, and own their *ſubjection to Emperours*, and their Authority. The teſtimonies of divers of them have been to this purpoſe produced by Proteſtant Writers: And it may be ſufficient here to note, that I have (*c*) in another place ſhewed, that *Leo the Great* ſubmiſſively

Obſerv. 3. *The high Papal power was unknown to the ancient* Roman *Biſhops*;

(*c*) Chriſt. Loyalty, B. 1. ch. 5. Sect. 3. To Leo *the Great*.

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miſſively owned his ſubjection to the Imperial Authority, and that with reſpect to the external adminiſtration of matters Eccleſiaſtical. And it is manifeſt, from the Writings of *Gregory the Great*, that he both ſubmiſſively behaved himſelf towards *Mauritius* the Emperour, as a *ſubject* towards his *Sovereign Lord*, and that he thought he ought ſo to do. When *Mauritius* declared his deſire, that there might be a good accord between S. *Gregory*, and *John* Patriarch of *Conſtantinople*, (*d*) *Gregory* writes to *Mauritius* giving him the title of *Dominus noſter à Deo conſtitutus*, his *Lord whom God had conſtituted*, and owns himſelf to be his Servant, (and ſuch language is very frequent in his Epiſtles) and lets the Emperour know, that in that matter, in which the cauſe of God was alſo concerned, he would do what on his part could be done, *Dominorum juſſionibus obedientiam præbens, yielding obedience to the commands of his Lord*; and in this caſe he ſaith, *Sereniſſimis juſſionibus obedientiam præbeo.* Which words ſhew ſufficiently, that he claimed not any *Sovereignty* over the Emperour, but acknowledged his owing *ſubjection* to him. And when *Mauritius* had made a *Law*, that no perſon in any publick Secular Office, ſhould be received into *Eccleſiaſtical Orders*, and that no Souldiers might be admitted into *Monaſteries*, *Gregory* writes a Letter to the Emperour concerning this Law, expreſſing his good liking and approbation of the former part, but with much (*e*) earneſtneſs declaring his diſlike of the latter part, as being contrary to God and Religion. And in the cloſe of that Epiſtle, he acquaints the Emperour, that *in ſubjection to his commands, he had cauſed that Law to be tranſmitted to ſeveral parts of the Empire*, but yet had plainly *written to him how much it was againſt God.* And then adds, *utrobique ergo quod debui exolvi, qui & Imperatori obedientiam præbui, & pro Deo quod ſenſi minime tacui*; On both hands therefore I have performed what I ought, I have yielded obedience *to the Emperour*, and I have not forborn to ſpeak what was my judgement *on the behalf of God.* And in this Epiſtle alſo (and in others frequently) he

(*d*) Gr. Ep. l. 4. Ep. 76.

To Gregory the Great,

(*e*) Gr. Ep. l. 2. Ep. 100.

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he owns *Mauritius* to be his *Lord*, and himſelf to be his *Servant*. And the uſual ſubterfuge of *Romiſh* Writers, that what the Popes have ſpoken in ſuch a reſpect to Emperours, was from *humility*, and gracious *condeſcenſion* only, can have no place here. For he went as far as any *Subject* in his capacity might do, in what he was perſwaded was *unlawful*; and further than he might do, who was no Subject. In humility he might diſpenſe with his own right, but not with what concerns God and Religion.

15. Theſe things do ſo plainly ſhew, that thoſe ancient Biſhops acknowledged the Emperour to be their *Superiour*, even in conſtituting *Laws*, and doing other acts, which had reſpect to the ſtate of *Religion*, that I think it unneceſſary to add other inſtances, which might be given for many Centuries. The known expreſſion of *Otho Friſingenſis* declares *Gregory* the Seventh, to be the firſt of the *Roman* Biſhops who uſurped the depoſing power. But *Conradus* (*f*) *Urſpergenſis* differing herein from *Otho*, whom he mentions, ſeems to fix the firſt Original of theſe Papal proceedings upon *Gregory the Third*, who above ſeven hundred years after Chriſt, in the conteſt concerning *Images* (where it might have been expected that he who was ſo earneſt for the *adoration of Images*, ſhould have highly honoured the Emperour, who bare the *impreſs of Divine authority*) did (*g*) forbid *Italy* to pay any *tribute* to *Leo Iſaurus* the Emperour, and deprived him of his rights there. But it is manifeſt that all the *Roman* Biſhops who ſucceeded him, were not of the like ſpirit and temper. Above an hundred years after him, *Leo the Fourth* (*h*) aſſures *Lotharius* the Emperour, that he would as much as he was able, irrefragably keep and obſerve his *imperial precepts*, and that they were *lyars* who ſhould ſuggeſt the contrary concerning him; and (*i*) he likewiſe ſubmits his actions, to be examined by the Emperour, or ſuch as he ſhould commiſſionate, and to be *corrected* or amended, if he had *done amiſs*, and not kept to the right rule of the Law.

(*f*) Urſp. p. 336.

(*g*) Ibid. p. 286.

(*h*) Gratian. Diſt. 10. de capitulis. *and to* Leo *the Fourth.*

(*i*) c. 2. qu. 7. Nos ſi incompetenter.

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Such Principles of Rebellion lead men to damnation.

16. But the main hurt of this pretended Papal power, ſo much contended for at *Rome*, is not only the *diſturbing peace*, fomenting Wars, and *unjuſt invading* the right of Princes: but beſides the *ambition* therein contained; by ſtirring up Subjects in *rebellion* againſt their Soveraigns, it puts them according to S. *Paul*'s Doctrine into a *ſtate of damnation*, Rom. 13. 2. And ſuch rebellious practices are the more promoted, by thoſe *frantick principles*, of many of the Church of *Rome*, which have ſpread themſelves alſo amongſt other *Sects*, which give liberty to Subjects (without reſpect to the Popes Sentence) to take away the lives of *Princes*. It is too clear to be denied, that ſuch Poſitions are maintained by divers of the *Jeſuits*, and it muſt be granted alſo, that there is truth in what ſome of the *Jeſuits* have obſerved, that the like was aſſerted by *other Writers* in the Church of *Rome*, before the firſt inſtitution of that Order.

The Pope's uſurped claim over other Churches and Biſhops

17. There is alſo great diſorder and evil, unduly occaſioned in the Church, by the claim the *Roman* See pretends to, over all other *Biſhops and Churches*. To this authority ſhe hath no *juſt title*; but the *exerciſe* of this power did obtain and prevail in many Churches, by various methods and degrees of *encroachment*. And by this means both *rights* and alſo purity and due order are jointly violated. Hence this Church obtrudes on others, her *pernicious Doctrines* and practices, under a pretence of authority. And by the ſame means, it hinders the neceſſary *reformation* of great and ſpreading corruptions, and thunders out *Cenſures* againſt ſuch Churches as reform themſelves according to Primitive and Apoſtolical rules.

18. Now ſuch an Authority over all other Biſhops and Churches, could never be founded in any actual *poſſeſſion*, or in any human or *Eccleſiaſtical conſtitution*, of what nature ſoever. For an *incroaching authority* is void, by the ancient Canons, eſpecially that of *Epheſus*, and being an unjuſt poſſeſſion, ought to return to him, who hath the true right. And where there hath been any *conſent* given

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falſly pretended to be of Divine Authority:

to an unjuſt claim, by miſunderſtanding, or upon any other account; or where any other act whatſoever hath been done by *Princes*, or by *Biſhops* in any part of the Church, to yield or convey any Superiour Authority to the *Roman Biſhop*, they cannot by any act of their own exclude themſelves and their Succeſſors from the obligation to perform their duty, in duly *guiding*, governing and *reforming* their people. And therefore ſo far as the authority, which *Princes and Biſhops* have received from God and Chriſt, doth oblige them to the performance of this work, no *pretended power* of the Biſhop of *Rome*, nor any act done by any others, or even by themſelves, can ſet them free from it. But this univerſal Superiority is claimed by the Pope, as not derived from any *human Conſtitution*, but from the *authority of Chriſt*. To which purpoſe the Catechiſm according to the Decree of the Council of *Trent* declares, That the Catholick Church (*k*) *Summum in eo dignitatis gradum, & jurisdictionis amplitudinem; non quidem ullis Synodicis aut aliis humanis conſtitutionibus, ſed divinitus datam agnoſcit: quamobrem omnium fidelium, & epiſcoporum, cæterorumque antiſtitum, quocunque illi munere, & poteſtate præditi ſint, pater, ac moderator, univerſali Eccleſiæ, ut Petri Succeſſor, Chriſtique Domini verus & legitimus vicarius præſidet*; doth *acknowledge in him* (the Pope) *the higheſt degree of dignity and amplitude of Jurisdiction, not given him by any Synodical, or other human Conſtitutions, but by Divine Authority: wherefore he the Father and Governour of all the Faithful, and of the Biſhops, and the reſt who are in chief Authority, whatſoever Office or Power they are indued with; doth preſide over the the Univerſal Church, as the Succeſſor of* Peter, *and the true and lawful Vicar of Chriſt the Lord.*

(*k*) Catech. ad Paroch. c. de Ordinis Sacramento.

it was unknown to the ancient Church;

19. But notwithſtanding this great noiſe, no ſuch Divine inſtitution hath been or can be produced; and *paſce oves*, and *tu es Petrus* have been oft ſcanned, and no ſuch thing can be found in them. And it is conſiderable, that the *ancient Biſhops of Rome* owned not, nor claimed any

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ſuch Authority, nor was any ſuch given to them, by the Primitive Church. To this purpoſe it may be obſerved from (*l*) *Epiphanius*, that when *Marcion being excommunicated* by his own Father a pious Biſhop, for his debauchery, went to *Rome*, and deſired there to be received into Communion, he was told there, by *thoſe Elders yet alive who were the Diſciples of the Apoſtles*, that they *could not receive him without the permiſſion of his Reverend Father: there being one Faith, and one Concord, they could not act contrary to their Fellow Miniſters.* And this was agreeable to the Rules and Canons of the ancient Church, whereby it was ordained. (*m*) that if any *excommunicate perſon* ſhould be received in another City, whither he ſhould come, *not having commendatory Letters, he who received him, ſhould be himſelf alſo under excommunication.* And the novel *Romiſh* Notion, of all other Biſhops ſo depending on the *Roman*, as to *derive their power* and authority from him, is ſo contrary to the ſenſe of the ancient Church, that (*n*) S. *Hierome* declares *ubicunque fuerit Epiſcopus, ſive Romæ, ſive Eugubii——ejuſdem meriti, ejuſdem eſt & ſacerdotii——omnes Apoſtolorum ſucceſſores ſunt; whereſoever there was a Biſhop; whether at* Rome *or at* Gubio——*he is of the ſame worth, and the ſame Prieſthood,——they are all Succeſſors of the Apoſtles.*

(*l*) Epiph. Hær. 42.

(*m*) Can. Ap. 12.

(*n*) Hieron. Ep. ad Evagrium.

and prejudicial to other Churches, and to Religion it ſelf.

20. However the *Romiſh* Church upon this encroachment and falſe pretence, claims a power to receive *appeals* from any other Churches. And this oft proves a great obſtacle to the Government, and *diſcipline* of thoſe Churches; and an heavy and burdenſome moleſtation to particular perſons, by chargeable tedious and *dilatory proſecutions*: and is a method alſo of exhauſting the *treaſures* of other Churches and Kingdoms, to gratifie ambitious avarice. But even the (*o*) Canon Law declares the great reaſonableneſs, that *every Province*, where there is *ten or eleven Cities, and a King, ſhould have a Metropolitan and other Biſhops*, and that all cauſes ſhould be *judged and determined by them* among themſelves; and that no Province ought to be *ſo much*

(*o*) c. 6. qu. 3. ſcitote.

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much debased and degraded, as to be *deprived of such a Judicature.* Indeed the Canon Law doth here for the sake of the *Roman* See, exempt such cases from this judgement, where those who are *to be judged* enter an *appeal*, which is much different from the *appeal* the ancient Church allowed (*p*) to a more General Council *after the* insufficient hearing of a Provincial one. But in truth this right of ordering and *judging* what is fit in *every Province*, is not only the right of that particular *Church*, or Country or *Kingdom*; but where they proceed according to truth and goodness, it is the right of *God*, and the *Christian Religion*, which is above all contrary authority of any other, and ought not to be violated thereby. And appeals from hence (*pp*) even to *Rome* were anciently prohibited in *Africa*.

(*p*) Conc. Constant. c 6.

(*pp*) Cod. can. Eccl. Afr. c. 28.

21. And the *Schismatical uncharitableness* of them at *Rome*, towards other Churches, deserves here to be mentioned. This widens divisions and discords, and perpetuates them by declaring an *irreconcileable opposition* to peace and truth. They *excommunicate* them as Hereticks, who discerning their right, and their duty, will not submit themselves to their usurpations, and embrace their errors, and to them they hereupon deny the hopes of *Salvation*. Thus they deal with them, who stedfastly hold to the Catholick *faith*, and to all the holy rules of the *Christian life* and practice, delivered by the Apostles, and received by the Primitive Church; and who also embrace that *Catholick charity* and Unity, that they own Communion with all the true and regular members of the Christian Church; and would with as much joy, *communicate* with the *Roman* Church her self, if she would make her Worship and Communion, and the terms of it free from sin, as the Father in the Gospel embraced his returning Son. But this is the *crime* of such Churches, that while they hold fast the Apostolical Faith and Order, they reject the novel *additional doctrines*, introduced by the Church of *Rome*, and they submit not to her usurped *authority*, in not doing what

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what in duty to God they ought to do, in imbracing the right wayes of truth.

Their unjuſt excommunications hurt not others,

22. But the *excommunicating* ſuch perſons and Churches, doth no hurt to them, who undeſervedly lie under this unjuſt cenſure, but the *effect* of the cenſure may fall on them who thus excommunicate. For they who reject the Communion of them, who are true and orderly Members of the Church Catholick, do divide themſelves from that Communion. To this ſenſe is that received rule, (*q*) *illicita excommunicatio non lædit eum qui notatur, ſed eum à quo notatur:* and this was declared by (*r*) *Nicon*, to be agreeable to the Canons. And the excellency and power of the true *Catholick Doctrine*, and the purity thereof, is ſo much to be preferred, before the authority of any perſons whomſoever who *oppoſe* it, that that which the ancient Canons (*ſ*) eſtabliſhed was very fit and juſt, that if any *Biſhops* (and conſequently any other perſons) were *ejected from their own Churches*, or ſuffered any cenſures unjuſtly, for their *adhering to the Catholick Faith and profeſſion*, they ought ſtill to be received in other Churches and Cities, with *kindneſs and love*. And whereas there were Canons of the Church, which allowed not Biſhops to reſide in other Churches and Dioceſes; theſe Fathers at *Sardica* diſpenſe with that Rule, in ſuch a caſe as this, and thereby declare their ſenſe to be, That the obſervation of *Canonical eſtabliſhments*, muſt give place, where the higher duties of reſpect to the *Chriſtian Faith and Charity* were concerned.

(q) c. 24. qu. 3. c. ſi habes; & c. certum.

(r) in Balſamon. p. 1096.

(ſ) Conc. Sardic. c. 17.

but only themſelves.

23. When the *Scribes and Phariſees* condemned the Doctrine of Chriſt and his Apoſtles for *Hereſie*, and caſt them, who received it, out of the Church; the Chriſtians were nevertheleſs the *true members* of the Church, but they who rejected them were not ſo. And when the *Donatiſts* would allow none but their own party to belong to the Church, they thereby caſt themſelves out of the Catholick Communion, as *Schiſmaticks*. And when they at *Rome* ſo far follow their ſteps, as to confine the Chriſtian Communion to themſelves; or to a *particular Church*, eſpecially

cially such an one, as so greatly swerves from the truth and purity of the Christian Religion; this is in effect to deny that Article of our Creed, concerning the *Holy Catholick Church*. And since Charity and *Unity* are of so great concernment in Christianity, on that account also they are none of the best members of the Church, who are so far from them, as all of the *Romish* Communion are obliged to be; and are thereby guilty of *heinous sin*, and of that which is greatly scandalous to Christianity. Sect. II.

SECT. II.

The Doctrines maintained in the Church of Rome, *and the Constitutions therein established, are great hindrances to* holiness *of life, and true devotion in Religion, and comply very far with Wickedness and Debauchery.*

1. I Shall now come to consider, that there are such *doctrines* asserted by the Church of *Rome*, and such *practices* established therein, as are plain obstacles and hindrances to a *holy life*. Holiness and purity are suitable to the nature of God, and agreeable to the end of Christ's coming into the World, to *redeem us from all iniquity, and to purifie to himself a peculiar people zealous of good works*, Tit. 2. 14. This is a compliance with his Gospel, which is a *doctrine according to Godliness*, and his Church which he founded, is an *holy Catholick Church*. And therefore nothing can be of God and Christ, which is not agreeable to true goodness and piety, but that must be *contrary to God* and Christianity, which is opposite to holiness and a godly life. But that the Church of *Rome* doth declare such Doctrines, as undermine piety and holiness, and establishes such: *Obstacles in the* Roman *Church to an holy life.*

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ſuch conſtitutions and practices, as are highly prejudicial thereunto, I ſhall manifeſt by ſome particular inſtances. And here I ſhall conſider,

1. *In their Doctrine of Attrition and Abſolution:*

2. *Firſt*, Their Doctrine of *Abſolution.* This is ſuch that it ſooths men in their ſins, and thereby takes away the weighty Motive and Argument to holineſs of life, which is from the *neceſſity* thereof, to avoid the wrath of God, and endleſs perdition, and to obtain the favour of God and everlaſting ſalvation. For this Church and the Writers thereof, do generally teach that *attrition* though without *contrition*, is a ſufficient diſpoſition or qualification for the receiving *Prieſtly abſolution*, and that perſons ſo qualified, and thereupon abſolved, are in a ſafe ſtate, as to the avoiding *eternal damnation*, and the future enterance into everlaſting happineſs. Now *contrition* includes a grief for, and hatred of ſin, as it is an offence of God, with a purpoſe and reſolution not to go on in the practice of evil, and this is conjoined with a *chief love to God.* But *attrition* is a grief for ſin, in ſuch a manner that it is not produced from, nor containeth in it the *chief love of God* and goodneſs. And when divers wayes are either aſſerted, or diſputed of by many Caſuiſts, concerning the difference between Attrition and Contrition, *Mart. Becanus* ſpeaks with much plainneſs, and I think with truth, when he tells us (*a*) that *contrition includes averſion from ſin, and converſion to God, which is in loving him above all*; and that this principle of the *love of God* (which includes conſequently hatred of ſin, and turning from it) is that thing in which *contrition eſſentially differs from attrition*, and that all other differences or wayes of diſtinguiſhing them are either to be *rejected as falſe*, or may be ſpared as *being of little or no uſe.*

(*a*) Part. 3. Tr. 2. c. 35. Qu. 1.

3. Now ſome Writers of the *Romiſh* Communion, eſpecially in former Ages, have been of opinion, that *contrition is neceſſary to juſtification.* But this aſſertion is declared by (*b*) *Gr. de Valentia*, to be *ſententia his preſertim temporibus vix*

(*b*) Tom. 4. Diſp. 3. Qu. 8. Punct. 3.

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vix tolerabilis, ſuch an one as eſpecially in theſe times is ſcarce *fit to be tolerated* And he calls the other the common opinion. This (*c*) *Bellarmine* takes for granted and *Becanus* declares (*d*) *omnes fatentur contritionem non eſſe neceſſariam in Sacramento Pœnitentiæ*, that all acknowledge that *Contrition is not neceſſary in the Sacrament of Penance.* And theſe Writers, and many others, affirm the Council of *Trent* to have declared thus much. And that Council plainly enough determines, that *Contrition* (*e*) *is a grief of mind* for ſin already committed, *with a purpoſe* to do ſo no more; and that this which encludes a *hatred of the paſt evil life*, and the *beginning of a new life*, when it hath *Charity* joined with it, doth *reconcile man to God before the actual receiving the Sacrament of Penance*, if there be a *deſire to partake thereof.* But then it adds, concerning another ſort of ſorrow, from the *foulneſs of the ſin or the fear of puniſhment*, *ex peccati turpitudine, vel ex ſupplicii metu*, and of this that Council determines, that it cannot bring a ſinner to juſtification, *without the Sacrament of Penance*, but it doth *diſpoſe him to obtain the favour of God in the Sacrament of Penance.* Now the reſult of all this according to the plaineſt ſenſe their own Authours give, is, that if a wicked man ready to go out of the world, ſhall be troubled when he apprehends the foulneſs of his ſins, leſt he ſhould go to Hell, which is *attrition*, and ſhall then ſend to the Prieſt and receive Abſolution; this man though his *heart* be not turned from ſin to God, and to a love of him, and of goodneſs, will according to this looſe Doctrine, go out of the world in the favour of God and in a *juſtified ſtate.* And thus much is pretended to be effected, by vertue of the Sacrament of *Penance* and Prieſtly *Abſolution.*

(*c*) Bell. de pœnit. l. 2. c. 18.
(*d*) ubi ſup. Qu. 6.
(*e*) Seſſ. 13 de pœnitentia cap. 4.
A bad life encouraged hereby.

4. Now it is to be acknowledged, that the true *Miniſterial Abſolution* is very profitable (being in an eminent manner contained in diſpenſing the holy Sacraments) and is of much greater weight than many men account it to be, to them that believe and truly repent, or to them who ſincerely perform the *conditions of the Goſpel Covenant*: but

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no pretence of Absolution must be admitted, to make void these conditions. And it may be granted, that in the *Roman* Church, in some Societies, there are rules of *severity* directed to them who are disposed to seriousness: but this their Doctrine of Absolution takes off all *necessity* of observing any such rules, (or any *vows* whereby they obliged themselves to any duties or exercises of *perfection*) so far as concerns the fear of God, as to the interest of an eternal state. And this Doctrine opens a gap, to all *licentiousness of life*, contrary to the rules of Christianity, and all good conscience; by the security it pretends to give of eternal *happiness* to wicked and debauched men, who amend not their lives, nor forsake their sins. If this be truth, then are all the *promises and threatnings* of the Gospel made void; as they are Motives to the necessary duties of holiness and piety.

Holiness of Christianity undermined hereby.

5. By such arts as this, all the great *precepts of Religion* are made of none effect, in order to salvation. For if against this impure Doctrine, all those Texts of Scripture be urged, which require the *wicked man to repent*, and *turn from all his iniquities that he may live*, and other such like; we are told by (*f*) *Gr. de Valentia*, that this is the *general rule*, *extra sacramentum neminem posse justificari sine contritione*, *that excepting the use of the Sacrament, none can be justified without contrition.* But then he tells us, *casus quo Sacramentum pœnitentiæ usurpatur, plane ab illa lege universali exceptus est, that case in which the Sacrament of Penance is used, is clearly excepted from that universal Law.* And this exception, he says, is made in Christs instituting the *power of the Keys*, and of *remitting and retaining sins.* As if the power of the keys, and the *ministerial Authority*, (which rightly understood is great and excellent, though it be grossly perverted and abused by the *Romanists*, and sleighted and undervalued by others) was an underhand contrivance, to frustrate and defeat all the great precepts of God, and the Laws of Christianity. And these precepts are so far made void thereby, that (*g*) *Canus* confidently affirms, that

(*f*) Gr. de Valent. ubi sup.

(*g*) Melch. Can. Relect. 4. de Pœnit.

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that he who with *attrition* receives the *Sacrament of Penance*, is not only in a ſafe ſtate, but doth as much as the precepts of God require from him. Whereas (ſaith he) *Baptiſm and the Sacrament of Abſolution, confer grace to him that is attrite, and theſe two Sacraments were directly inſtituted for the remiſſion of all ſins; qui ſuſcipit alterum ex his ſive contritus ſive attritus, vere implet præceptum de pœnitentia, quoniam Deus nihil amplius exigit in compenſationem delicti commiſſi, quam vel contritionem ſine ſacramento, vel attritionem cum ſacramento; He who receives either of theſe, either with Contrition or with Attrition, doth really fulfil the precept of Repentance; becauſe God doth require nothing further, in compenſation for the fault committed, than either Contrition without the Sacrament, or Attrition with the Sacrament.* And thus the illuſtrious and ſubſtantial precepts of purity, and newneſs of life, are by theſe men made to dwindle into the ſhades of darkneſs.

This renders pious devotion unneceſſary.

6 And as this Doctrine of Attrition is improved by them, it tends to eat out all *true devotion*: ſince we are told by the *Romiſh* Caſuiſts, and Controverſial Writers, that this diſpoſition is ſufficient for performing the higheſt acts of Religion, even the receiving the *holy Euchariſt*. Indeed they ordinarily grant, that the *precept of Contrition* being an affirmative precept, doth oblige at ſome ſpecial times; though they are very ſparing in fixing theſe times: but many particularly mention the caſe of being in *danger of death*, and ſome add the receiving or diſpenſing a *Sacrament*, which ought to be handled reverently, and ſome may aſſign ſome other ſpecial caſes. But others can tell us, how that which is thus granted in words, ſhall contain nothing of reality under it. For if the Queſtion be propoſed, *whether when the precept of Contrition doth bind, Attrition with the Sacrament of Penance be not ſtill in that caſe ſufficient*; (*h*) *Becanus* declares, that though ſome be of the other opinion, they are moſt in the right who *affirm* this: becauſe the precept of Contrition is obligatory, only on them who have *mortal ſin*, and therefore if a man may be

(*k*) M. Bec. ubi ſup. Qu. 7.

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freed from mortal ſin by Attrition, *non amplius obligatur præcepto contritionis, he is no further bound by the precept of Contrition.* Such ſtrange methods are made uſe of to evacuate the Divine precepts. And they tell us that Attrition with Abſolution makes up Contrition.

Hereby ſinners are deluded by falſe hopes.

7. By theſe artifices *repentance* is miſrepreſented, as if it could be ſufficiently performed without amendment of life; and the way to Heaven is ſo deſcribed, as to be ſo far from requiring a *patient continuance in well doing*, that there is no neceſſity of well doing at all. This is to encourage men in ſuch a wicked and evil life, againſt which Chriſt the *righteous judge*, will pronounce an heavy Sentence. And thus they deal with the ſouls of men, as a flattering Mountebank may do with the Body, if he ſhould pretend, that he can cure the moſt dangerous diſeaſes, without carrying off the matter and cauſe of the diſtemper, and without his Patient's taking ſo much care, as to obſerve the rules of temperance and ſobriety: but that man who is wiſe will not give heed to ſuch deceitful boaſtings, nor venture his life upon confidence of the truth of them, when there are other rules and directions to be obſerved for his cure, from whence he may rationally and upon ſure grounds expect a good effect. Theſe Pontifician devices carry in them a perfect *eſtrangement* from the true Chriſtian rules; and ſince Chriſtianity conſiſts in *life and practice*, more than in words and profeſſion; that man who practiſeth on this Doctrine, may be a *Papiſt*, and do all that the Church of *Rome* requireth; but he cannot be a true *Chriſtian*, to do all that the Goſpel of our Saviour makes neceſſary to ſalvation.

8. I confeſs a bad man according to the *Romiſh* Doctrine will fail of ſalvation; if he miſs the opportunity, or neglect the care of *Abſolution*. But wicked men who hazard their ſouls and eternal happineſs, that they may gratifie their luſts, where they have no encouragements of hope propoſed to them, will much more do ſo where they have ſuch great encouragements. And according to this Doctrine, this *hazard* doth not ſeem exceeding great, when they may

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frequently confeſs and be abſolved, and eſpecially after they have committed any mortal ſin, and thereby ſet all things again even and ſtrait, between God and themſelves, ſo far as concerns their being in a juſtified ſtate. And what may be pretended to remain as an obligation upon them to bear *temporal pains and ſatisfactions*, this alſo may be (*i*) otherwiſe provided for. Sect. II.

(*i*) v. Sect. 5. n. 14, &c.

9. And we may further conſider, how little goes to the making up of *Contrition* according to the *Romiſh* Caſuiſts, or ſuch a *repentance* as availeth to juſtification, without the Sacrament of Penance. Of this I ſhall give an account from Father (*k*) *Layman*. He declares that the *ſubſtance of Contrition* conſiſts in deteſting ſin above all evil: but (*l*) any *continuance of time* is not neceſſary to that contrition, by which a ſinner is juſtified, but one *ſimple act of grief* is ſufficient: and it is moſt probable, that *without calling his ſins to remembrance* he may be perfectly converted, and juſtified by contrition, *temporis momento*, in a moment of time. And he farther ſaith (*m*) that any *expreſs purpoſe, of keeping Gods Commands, or abſtaining from ſin* is not neceſſary, further than it is *vertually included* in an act of deteſtation of ſin, in which he *hath no thought of his future courſe of life*. But this notion of Contrition I ſhall not purſue; nor yet thoſe others in their Caſuiſtical Writers, whereby they very rarely allow ſuch affirmative precepts, as that great one of *loving God*, to oblige us to exerciſe any act of love to him: which is much conſequent upon their uſual aſſertions concerning Attrition. For my intention is to wave many things declared by conſiderable Doctors, and mainly to inſiſt on thoſe, which have the publick allowance and *eſtabliſhment of the Church*.

Of Contrition.

(*k*) Theol. Mor. l. 5. Tract. 6. c. 4. n. 1.

(*l*) ib. n. 2.

(*m*) ib. n. 3.

10. *Secondly*, Another obſtacle to a pious life, which I ſhall conſider is, the debarring the people of the beſt guide and help to piety, which is the uſe of the *Holy Scriptures*. The Divine Scriptures are by the Fathers oft called the *Letters*, and *Meſſages* which God ſends to men, to invite them-

2. *Of their prohibiting the common uſe of the Scriptures.*

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to him, and guide them in their way: and then ſurely they to whom, and for whom they are ſent, ought to know and read them, both out of *Reverence* to God, and out of *reſpect to themſelves*. (*n*) S. *Auſtin* obſerves this double benefit in reading the holy Scriptures, that they teach us *knowledge*, and right underſtanding, and that they carry men off from the vanities of the world, unto the *love of God*; and obſerves how greatly efficacious they are, to the promoting *piety* in very great numbers, and that they were deſigned for our Salvation.

(*n*) de Tempore Serm. 112.

The Scriptures greatly promote piety.

11. Theſe Scriptures were written by the *inſpiration of God*, and contain the ſure rule for Faith and Life, and were ſo accounted of in the ancient Church. Herein is comprized the Will and Counſel of God, declared by the *Holy Ghoſt* himſelf. And the *precepts* and holy rules there propoſed, the *promiſes* declared, the *threatnings* denounced, the *judgements* executed on the diſobedient, and the *bleſſings* beſtowed on the obedient, are great incitements to piety; and are of the greater force and weight, as they are contained in the Scriptures, becauſe the *Divine Authority* goes along with every one of them. And the end for which they were written, is *for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope*, Rom. 15. 4. And the puniſhments there recorded, which were inflicted on evil doers, were *for enſamples, and written for our admonition*, 1 Cor. 10. 11. Theſe holy Books, the Primitive Chriſtians were not denied the uſe of, and they ſo highly eſteemed this priviledge, that rather than they would deliver up theſe Books to their perſecutors, the beſt Chriſtians choſe to undergo the *utmoſt torments* and ſufferings; and of ſuch (*o*) *Baronius* obſerves, that there was *numerus prope infinitus eorum qui ne codices ſacros traderent, lubentiſſimo animo mortem oppetiverunt; almoſt an infinite number of thoſe, who with the greateſt readineſs of mind, choſe death rather than to deliver up the Holy Books*. And they who did deliver them, were accounted grievous offenders, and called *Traditores* (the name given to *Judas* who betrayed our Lord)

(*o*) Baron. Annal. Ecc. An. 302. n. 22.

Lord) and of these, as (*p*) *Optatus* saith, there were many of all ranks both *Laicks and Clergy*. Sect. II.

12. The use of the Scriptures is of such excellent advantage, to promote piety and the happiness of men, that the Psalmist under the infallible guidance of the Holy Spirit, declares the blessed and good man, to *delight himself in the law of the Lord, and to meditate therein day and night*, Psal. 1. 2. And this makes him so to increase, and be fruitful in good works, that *v.* 3. he is resembled to a *tree planted by the rivers of water, which brings forth his fruit in due season*. And the excellent use of this Divine Law is described, *Psal.* 19. 7—11. in *converting the soul, making wise the simple*, and other great benefits. Yea they are of such manifold and compleat use for the good of man, that the Apostle declares them *able to make one wise unto Salvation, and to be profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished to every good work*, 2 Tim. 3. 15, 16, 17. And they have that mighty efficacy, to prevail on the hearts and consciences of men, that our Lord acquaints us, that they who would *not hear Moses and the Prophets*, would *not be perswaded though one arose from the dead*, Luke 16. 31.

(*p*) Advers. Parm. l. 1.

13. But the *Romish* Church *prohibits* the use of the Scripture to the generality of their Communion; as is manifest from the *Index of prohibited Books*, (*q*) which was ordered by the Council of *Trent*, and was compleated about the end of that Council; but the confirmation thereof, was referred to the Pope, by the Decree of that Council; and it was approved by the Authority of *Pius* the Fourth. In this (*r*) Index it is declared, That *since it is manifest by experience, that if the Holy Bible in the Vulgar Tongue, be permitted generally without distinction, there would thence from the rashness of men, more hurt arise than advantage*; in this matter it must be left to the *judgement of the Bishop or Inquisitor, that with the advice of the Parish Priest or Confessor, he may grant to them the reading of the Bible, in the Vulgar Tongue*,

(*q*) Conc. Trident. Sess. ult. prope fin.

(*r*) Indic. Reg. 4. *How far vulgar Translations are prohibited in the* Roman *Church.*

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Tongue, tranſlated by Catholick Authors, whom they ſhall underſtand may receive by ſuch reading not hurt, but increaſe of faith and piety; which faculty they ſhould have in writing. But whoſoever without ſuch a faculty ſhall preſume to read or to have them, may not obtain the abſolution of their ſins, unleſs they firſt deliver their Bibles to the Ordinary. And then follows the penalty of the *Bookſeller*, who ſhall ſell, or otherwiſe procure ſuch Bibles, to them who have not a *faculty*. And from this Index, the ſubſtantial part of this rule is expreſſed in (*ſ*) *Chamier*, and ſomewhat more at large in the Book of (*t*) *Jacobus Ledeſima* the Jeſuit, *De ſcripturis divinis quavis lingua non legendis*, and is mentioned in ſome *Engliſh* Writers. It is therefore condemned, as a very heinous and *mortal crime*, without all theſe cautions, to have or read a Bible in the Vulgar tongue, though it be in a verſion of their own. And if it be conſidered how liable to *cenſure* and diſlike, the uſe of ſuch Bibles are, in the *Romiſh* Communion, as their own Writers declare; it may thence be concluded, that many zealous Papiſts will be backward to *deſire* any ſuch thing, which others muſt not expect to *obtain*. And upon further conſideration, of what difficulties may be expected, in the gaining this faculty, and the procuring the conſent of thoſe by whoſe authority and with whoſe advice it muſt be obtained; any reaſonable man will diſcern, that ſuch faculties are not like to be very common.

(*ſ*) Panſtrat. Cath. Tom. 1. l. 10. c. 1.
(*t*) Ledeſ. c. 15.

This prohibition is many wayes evil.

14. But ſuch a *prohibition* is upon many accounts evil. *Firſt*, It being a duty and pious practice for men to acquaint themſelves with the Holy Scriptures, *Pſal.* 1. 2. *Pſal.* 78. 5, 6. *Jo.* 5. 39. *Act.* 17. 11. it is an *oppoſition to God* and goodneſs to deny them the liberty, to do that, which pleaſeth him, and is their duty. *Secondly*, Since God gave this as one great *gift to his Church*, that they ſhould have the Sacred Oracles of the Holy Scriptures, which they might all acquaint themſelves with, (as our Lord ſaid, *they have Moſes and the Prophets*, Luk. 16. 29.) and it is one of the advantages Chriſt hath beſtowed on his Church, that

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that they may have the knowledge of the Doctrine of the Goſpel, as it was dictated by the infallible *inſpiration of the Holy Ghoſt*, as will appear from *n.* 17. it is high injuſtice and *ſacrilegious fraud*, to deprive the Members of the Chriſtian Church, of that excellent good, which the *will of Chriſt* bequeathed to them, and is their right. *Thirdly*, The reading the Holy Scriptures being of ſuch excellent *uſefulneſs* to men, (as was obſerved *n.* 10, 11, 12.) this prohibition is a thing very uncharitable to men. *Fourthly*, The ground on which they proceed, that the uſe of the Scriptures, if generally permitted, is more to the *prejudice*, than advantage and benefit of men, when the Holy Spirit himſelf declares them to be greatly *profitable*, as was obſerved *n.* 12. this is to charge the wiſdom of God with folly, as if in his great acts of favour and kindneſs, he had not wiſely conſulted the good of man; but had by the inſpiration of the Holy Ghoſt made ſuch *Books publick*, which if the Church of *Rome* did not take care, that they might not come into the hands of the greateſt part of men, would do a great deal of *hurt to the World*. And now I need not make remarks to ſhew how little there is of piety in ſuch things as theſe.

15. The Churches of God of old, ſteered another courſe, from this of the *Romaniſts*. That amongſt the *Jews* at the time of our Saviours coming, and his Apoſtles preaching, the people were not debarred the uſe of the Holy Scriptures, though they were clearly oppoſite to the Traditions and corrupt Doctrines of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, may appear from our Saviours putting them upon *ſearching the Scriptures*, Jo. 5. 39. from S. *Peter*'s commending their taking heed to the *ſure word of prophecy*, 2 Pet. 1. 19. as alſo from the *Bereans ſearching the Scriptures daily*, Act. 17. 11. and *Timothy*'s having *known them from a child*, 2 Tim. 3. 16.

The Scriptures were generally allowed to be read by the Jews *and ancient Chriſtians,*

16. That the *ancient Chriſtians* had the Scriptures tranſlated into the ſeveral languages of the Countreys, in which there were any Chriſtian Churches founded, is manifeſt

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from the teſtimonies of S. *Hierome*, S. *Chryſoſtome* and *Theoderet*, which have been produced (*u*) by the Authors of our laſt *Engliſh* tranſlation. In which they particularly mention the *Egyptians*, *Indians*, *Perſians*, *Armenians*, *Scythians*, *Æthiopians*, *Romans*, *Goths*, and ſome others. And (*w*) *Polycarp* declares to the Church of the *Philippians*, to whom he writes, that he truſts they were *exerciſed in the holy Scriptures*. And (*x*) *Chryſoſtome* exhorts his Auditors, that they would *diligently read* the holy Scriptures *at home in their houſes*: and the like is frequently done by S. *Auſtin*, and divers other the moſt eminent ancient Writers. Nor was the Scripture then forbidden to be read even by *children*: but *Euſebius* (*y*) tells us how uſefully, and to what good purpoſe, for the guiding and eſtabliſhing of many Chriſtians in the time of Perſecution, *Origen* had been exerciſed in the holy Scriptures in his very *childhood*.

(*u*) In their Epiſtle prefixed to the Bible.

(*w*) Ep. ad Phil. p. 23. ed. Uſſer.

(*x*) de Lazaro.

(*y*) Euſ. Hiſt. Eccl. l. 6. c. 3'.

and were ſo deſigned of God.

17. But we need go no further in this caſe than to the Holy Scriptures themſelves. S. *Paul* directs his Epiſtle to the Church of *Rome*, Rom. 1. 7. *To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be Saints*; and his firſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 1. 2. *To the Church at Corinth, called to be Saints, with all that in every place call on the name of Chriſt*; and his ſecond Epiſtle to the Church of God which is *at Corinth, with all the Saints which are in all Achaia*, 2 Cor. 1. 1. Now it is plain from hence, that he intended they might all know and read the matter of his Epiſtles; and that theſe (and conſequently other) parts of the Canon of the holy Scripture, were not under a *prohibition*, that they might not be read by the major part of Chriſtians. And when the hearers of S. *Peter* at *Rome*, as (*z*) *Euſebius* relates, were not ſatisfied with hearing, χ᾽ ἀγράφῳ τῦ θείυ κηρύγματ]ᾳ διδασκαλίᾳ, and *Doctrine of the Divine declaration without writing*, they prevailed with S. *Mark*, *to write for them the ſumm of the Chriſtian Doctrine*, and leave it with them, and this their deſire was very well approved by S. *Peter*. But let him who can conceive ſuch ſtrange things, ſuppoſe that

(*z*) Hiſt. Eccl. l. 2. c. 14.

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that to gratifie their desire, of being rightly guided in the Christian Doctrine, and for their *future instruction*, when these teachers should remove to another place, the Gospel of S. *Mark* was left with them, but under such a prohibition, that none might read it, or know the particular contents thereof, unless he should obtain a *particular faculty in writing* from S. *Peter*, or S. *Mark*, to that purpose. And when S. *Peter* wrote his Epistles, that the Christians even *after his decease, might have those things always in remembrance*, 2 Pet. 1. 12, 13, 15. and *chap.* 3. 1, 2. it is something hard to imagine, how they should be able to make such use of these Epistles, as to keep in memory the Christian truth and precepts, if they were not permitted to read them, or to know the contents thereof. And when Saint *John*'s Gospel was written, *Joh.* 20. 31. that men might *believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that believing they may have life through his name*; surely no man can think, that what was written for this purpose, might not be read for the same purpose, by those who were concerned to *believe* and obtain *life*.

Pretended reverence reflected on.

18. Some of the Church of *Rome* have pretended, that they shew *reverence* to the holy Scriptures, and treat them as Sacred things with veneration, when they take care, they may not come into the hands of every common person. But a due reverence to any *Divine institution*, is not to forbid it to the generality of Christians, but to take care that there be a diligent and pious use thereof. Thus a right veneration to the solemn *worship of God*, and the holy *Sacraments*, is not performed in prohibiting Christians to attend thereupon, and partake thereof, but in their *devout communicating* in these duties of Religion.

19. But the chief thing objected is, that by the use of the Scriptures, many are led into *errors* and vain opinions: and the danger of *heresie* by the Scriptures being translated, is insisted on by (*a*) *Ledesima*, and other Writers of the Papists; and they take care to provide against this miscarriage. To this I answer. 1. The plea of *avoiding error*,

(*a*) de Div. Script. quavis lingua non legendis.

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The Objection from the abuse of the Scriptures by some men to promote Heresies, considered.

is ill made in this case, by them who keep all of their communion who *read not the Scriptures*, blindfold under so many and great errors. 2. The Scriptures are indeed very proper to lead men into that truth, which they *unjustly call heresie*, in that as an excellent rule, they discover to diligent, pious and unprejudiced enquirers, what is straight and what is crooked. And *Ledesima* the Jesuit acknowledgeth, that when the Protestants took counsel for the translating the Scriptures, and the dispersing them abroad, this was a most apt and fit means to promote their interest; (*b*) *de sacrorum librorum versione, consilio ad eam rem appositissimo, omnibus promulganda, inter ipsos hæreticos agitari est cæptum.* Now it is some honour to the Protestant cause, that the Scriptures do so much favour them, that the having them made known to all men, is so *apt a means to promote their interest.* And when for this cause the *Romanists* design to keep them secret, the *politickness* of this contrivance may be some advantage to their cause, as to Us *interest* amongst men, but it is withal a great *disparagement* to it with respect to its truth and goodness.

(*b*) ibid. c. 1.

20. *Thirdly*, If some men do miscarry by their *vanity*, *in wresting* the Scriptures to serve their errors, this is no just reason to prohibit the general use of a thing so excellent. If some men eat to surfet themselves, or use their understandings to abett error, and to cheat others by over-reaching them; or shall yield their eyes to behold vanity, their ears to be pleased with lewd discourse, or their wills to chuse evil; must the greater part of men be *forbidden* to eat, to consider, or to chuse any thing at all, and must their eyes be blindfolded, and their ears stopped, lest they should abuse them to evil? And the like might be urged concerning the use of mens hands, tongues, and almost of all *natural and acquired perfections*, and also of the *profession of Christianity* and the means of *grace*. And since the right knowledge of God and Religion, are things of so great excellency and high benefit; there is the less reason why the best means

means to obtain them ſhould be rejected, becauſe they may poſſibly be *abuſed*. Sect. II.

21. *Fourthly*, The Scriptures read with *piety and humility*, are excellently fitted to improve thoſe who read them, in *wiſdom and goodneſs*. And the goodneſs and *purity* which they recommend, and the *eternal intereſts* they propoſe, and the *authority of God* they bring along with them, have a great influence, through the grace of God there tendred, to work theſe humble and pious diſpoſitions. And therefore though ſome men may err and miſcarry, and be bad by abuſing them; it is far more probable that they ſhould *do amiſs*, who either want, or neglect the diligent and frequent uſe, of ſuch an excellent help. (*c*) S. *Chryſoſtome* obſerves that a vaſt multitude of evils proceed from the *ignorance of the Scriptures*, and amongſt others, he mentions the *peſt of Hereſie and a bad life*. And S. *Auſtin*, while he was ſpeaking of the excellency of the holy Scriptures, and the great benefit of the uſe of them, ſaith (*d*) *ſæpius cæcus offendit quam videns*; the *blind man*, or he who wants the advantage of ſeeing by the light, *more frequently ſtumbles than he who can ſee*.

(*c*) Præf. in Epiſt. ad Rom.

(*d*) de Tempore Serm. 112.

22. *Fifthly*, The wiſdom of God hath thought fit, to place man in ſuch a condition *in this world*, even under the Covenant of grace, that he is not out of *all capacity of offending*, in any caſe or circumſtances. They had a great priviledge who heard the words of the Goſpel, from the mouth of the *holy Jeſus* himſelf, or his Apoſtles; but this great bleſſing might be ill uſed by bad men, who were far from being benefitted thereby, if they were perverſe and obſtinate. And they who enjoyed theſe great advantages, if they were not careful and diligent to make a good improvement of them, were the *more highly guilty*, and under the more heavy condemnation. And ſo all *miniſterial helps*; and even various and frequent influences and aids of *divine grace*, may be abuſed by ill diſpoſed men, and ſo

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may be also the *Holy Scriptures*, by man who is a creature indued with liberty and choice. And it hath pleased God thus to order the state of man in the world, that the performance of his duty, by the Divine assistance, may be an act of his *care and choice*. Hereby his obedience becomes a *vertue*, and himself capable of reward or punishment in the performing or neglecting it. But there are no means or motives which men do enjoy, which more usefully conduce, to the promoting goodness, holiness and piety, than the holy Scriptures do. And there is no more reason to reject the use of them from any persons, because they may by some be wrested and used amiss, than there is to condemn the use of any other excellent *means of piety*, for the like reason; and to disapprove of the circumstances under which God hath placed man under the Gospel.

Amongst the Papists, Vulgar Translations have been very sparing.

23. But besides what respects the rule above mentioned, in the Index of Books prohibited, the Church of *Rome* hath used another way of *debarring the people* from the use of the Holy Scriptures; in being very sparing, of having any allowed *translation into vulgar languages*, composed by men of their own Communion. They take care that even (*e*) such *lessons* as are read out of any part of Scripture, in their publick Service, may not be read in the Common or Vulgar tongue of the Country. This *Bellarmine* acknowledgeth and asserteth to be prohibited, (*f*) *Prohibetur ne in publico & communi usu Ecclesiæ, Scripturæ legantur vel canantur vulgaribus linguis.* And in this he referreth to the (*g*) Council of *Trent*, which declares that it is not fit, *ut* (*Missa*) *vulgari passim lingua celebraretur.* And the word *Missa* here, (as very frequently) is not confined solely, to that which is peculiar to the *Eucharist*, but it takes in the whole publick Service. To this purpose (*h*) *Bellarmine* observes, *Missa accipitur pro tota celebratione divini officii, in quo Eucharistia consecrabatur, ut comprehendit simul Missam Catechumenorum, & hæc est communissima acceptio.* And hence such portions of Scripture as are parts of the publick service, are included in that

(*e*) Breviar. Rom. passim.

(*f*) Bell. de Verb. Dei. l. 2. c. 15.

(*g*) Conc. Trid. Sess. 22. c. 8.

(*h*) De Eucharist. l. 5. c. 1.

that rule and Conſtitution, which relates to the whole. And the (*i*) Cardinal declares, that what is done by the Proteſtants, is a real and practical aſſerting their *heretical opinion* againſt the Church, whilſt they ordinarily *tranſlate the Scriptures into the* German, French *and* Engliſh *tongues, and publickly read and ſing them in the ſame tongues.* In *England* before the Reformation, I know of no *allowed tranſlation into Engliſh*, made by any whom they own to be of their Communion. That of *Wiclef* though out of the Vulgar Latin, muſt not be owned as ſuch. Since the Reformation, the *Romaniſts* have tranſlated the Teſtament into *Engliſh:* but though theſe Books may be procured by ſome few perſons, they are not eaſily had by very many. And it is probable that in ſome *Popiſh Countries* they may have no tranſlation of the Scriptures into their Vulgar tongue to this time, which carryeth any *publick approbation* or allowance with it.

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(*i*) de Verbo Dei, c. 15.

24. A third impediment of piety in the *Romiſh* Church, which I ſhall inſtance in, is their having the *publick Prayers*, and the adminiſtration of the Offices of the Church, in a *language not underſtood* by the people, which is a great hindrance to their devotion. That this practice is generally uſed, and is eſtabliſhed and appointed in the Church of *Rome*, is ſufficiently known, and is manifeſt from the foregoing Section. But that the Primitive Church did generally own the fitneſs and uſefulneſs, of having the *publick ſervice* and Prayers of the Church, in a language underſtood by the common people, is evident enough, from what was then practiſed and eſtabliſhed. In a great part of the *Eaſtern Church*, where the *Greek* language was then the *common ſpeech* of the Country, as is well known, and doth appear from the popular Homilies of the *Greek* Fathers, which they ſpake in that language: they had their publick prayers and ſervice of the Church in the *Greek tongue*, and not in the *Latin*; and ſome of the ancient *Liturgies*, then uſed in that tongue, are ſtill extant. And in that part of

3. Of their publick Service and Prayers, in a tongue not underſtood by the people.

Publick Offices in the Primitive Church were performed in a tongue commonly underſtood.

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of the *Weſtern Church* in which the *Latin* was then the Vulgar or commonly known language, as in *Italy* and many other parts, the publick prayers and ſervice were performed in that tongue, and not in the *Greek*, or any other not commonly known in that Country. And this is proved from thoſe parts of the ancient *Latin Offices* which are ſtill preſerved.

25. But in ſuch other Countries, where neither of theſe languages were commonly known, there are ſufficient inſtances of the uſe of other languages which were known. In thoſe *Eaſtern* parts where the *Syriack* language obtained, they had their publick Offices in that language. And a Collection of ſixteen *Syriack Offices*, are declared by (*k*) *Gabriel Sionita* to be in a Manuſcript in his poſſeſſion, many of which were uſed together in the ſame Church; and others probably in other Churches and in other Ages. And after the firſt Centuries, when the *Arabick* and the *Coptick* or *Ægyptian* language prevailed much in *Egypt*, and the Patriarchate of *Alexandria*, they had alſo the *Coptick Liturgies* as (*l*) *Athanaſius Kircherus* teſtifies. And that part which might ſeem leaſt needful to be in the Vulgar tongue, which concerns the *Ordination* of their Eccleſiaſtical Officers, who might be preſumed to underſtand other tongues, was tranſlated by *Kircher* into *Latin*, out of a very ancient Manuſcript, in which all the *Ritual* was in the *Coptick tongue*, except the *exhortations* which were in the *Arabick*. This tranſlation was by *Kircher* ſent to *Nihuſius* 1647, and by him publiſhed five or ſix years after. And ſeveral other Liturgical forms, both in *Syriack* and other languages uſed in thoſe *Eaſtern* Churches, are mentioned by *Ecchellenſis*, in the account he gives of ſeveral Authours and Books, written in thoſe languages, in the end of his *Eutychius vindicatus*. And I doubt not but further proof may be given of this matter, by them who have the opportunity of ſeeing and conſulting ſuch Writers.

(*k*) Gabr. Sionit. de Ritib. Maronit. in init.

(*l*) In Epiſt. ad Nihuſium præf. Rituali Cophticarum.

That the people might underſtand the Service, care was taken by the Imperial Law.

26. To this general and practical teſtimony of the Church, in former ages, I ſhall add three *particular teſtimonies*,

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monies, but all of them of a publick nature, all which acknowledged the uſefulneſs, of the people underſtanding the publick Offices of the Church; and in the two former there was care taken thereof. The firſt is out of the Imperial Law: in (*o*) which it is enacted, that the *Biſhops and Prieſts ſhould expreſs the Prayers at the holy Communion and at Baptiſm, with a voice that might be heard by the faithful people; for the raiſing the ſouls of the hearers into a greater devotion*, and affectionate giving glory to God. And then that Law citeth the words of the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 14. 16. *Elſe when thou ſhalt bleſs with the Spirit, how ſhall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned ſay Amen, at thy giving of thanks, ſeeing he underſtands not what thou ſaiſt?* Which imperial Law takes care, that the Prayers of the Church may be underſtood by the people for their profit, providing that the words thereof ſhould be audibly pronounced, and ſuppoſing theſe Prayers to be expreſſed (as they then were) in a language commonly underſtood. A ſecond teſtimony is from the *Roman Pontifical*, in which was continued down to the Council of *Trent*, a direction at the Ordination of Lectors, as is noted in (*p*) the Hiſtory of that Council, *ut ſtudeant diſtincte & articulate legere, ut à populo intelligantur*. From whence it is eaſily collected, that when that Pontifical was compoſed, the ſervice of the *Roman Church* was then in that language, which was underſtood by the people; and the ſenſe of the *Roman* Church then was that it was requiſite it ſhould be *underſtood*: and by its authority it took care that it might be ſo expreſſed as to be underſtood. But when after ſome time, the *Latin* tongue by degrees grew out of vulgar uſe, eſpecially under the various Mutations in the Empire, there was then want of care to order the expreſſions of the publick ſervice to be ſuch, as would ſuit the capacities of the people.

(*o*) Juſtin. Novel. 137. c. 6.

by the Roman *Pontifical.*

(*p*) Hiſt. Con c. Trid. l. 6. p. 470.

27. The third teſtimony is, from the Council of *Trent*: which declares, (*q*) *Etſi Miſſa contineat magnam populi eruditionem, Patribus tamen viſum non expedire, ut vulgari paſſim lingua celebraretur. Quamobrem retento Eccleſiæ Ro-*

(*q*) Seſſ. 22. cap. 8.

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What the Council of Trent *acknowledge.*

manæ ritu, ne oves Christi esuriant, mandant Pastoribus, ut, inter Missarum celebrationem, aliquid ex iis quæ in Missa leguntur exponant, præsertim festis diebus. Though the publick Service or Mass contains much instruction for the people, it doth not seem fit to the Fathers that it should be usually celebrated in the Vulgar tongue. Wherefore retaining the rites of the Church of Rome, *they command the Pastors, that, in the time of its celebration, they expound somewhat of those things which are read in the Mass, especially upon Festival days.* Now here is an acknowledgment, that it is for the benefit of the people to *understand the Service* for their instruction, and yet a course is taken, that a main part thereof should not be understood, that they may still keep up the *Romish* usage, which hath for many ages thus practised. Only they shall be suffered to understand so much of what is contained therein, as may keep them from famishing.

28. But these words seem to carry along with them, some intimation of *guilty consciences* in this decision. As if a *Physician* should declare, that he knows such a Medicine to be mighty useful, to recover his Patient to his health, but however he doth not intend he shall have it, but he may apply to him such a part of the ingredients, as will keep him alive (and yet possibly he may be mistaken herein). Or this is something like, as if a *Judge* when he had considered a Case of right, concerning a temporal estate, should declare that there is a very fair and ample Patrimony, that belongs to *Sempronius*, and he ought to have the profit thereof: but nevertheless it seems fit to him, that *Sempronius* should not enjoy this Estate, that so no alterations may be made in present possessions. However he adjudgeth them who keep him out of his Patrimony, and debar him of his right, at some times, and especially upon festival days, to give *Sempronius* some such relief, as themselves shall think fit, for the satisfying his hunger, lest he should be *famished* for want of all supply of food. Now if such a Physician's practice be honest dealing, and the determination of such a Judge be doing justice in secular interests; then hath this Council *done right* to the members of

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the Church, and determined this caſe according to the rules of Chriſtian integrity. For as it is the duty of the *Paſtors* to feed the ſheep of Chriſt, ſo it is the right of the *ſheep* or people, to receive this food, and therefore to deny them much of that, which is acknowledged proper for them, is to *defraud* them of that, which juſtly belongs unto them.

Publick Service in a known language greatly uſeful.

29. But that the *publick Prayers* of the Church, ſhould be in a *language commonly underſtood* by the people, is both reaſonable and ſutable to the publick Service, and greatly uſeful and profitable to promote piety and edification. For the publick Worſhip of God rightly performed, is a great part of *practical Religion*. And devoutneſs therein, is both an eminent exerciſe of piety, and hath a great influence upon the minds of men to fix in them pious diſpoſitions for the right ordering the *whole courſe of life*. This devoutneſs is a vigorous, lively and holy exerciſe of the mind and affections, and the whole man towards God, and in his ſervice: and whilſt fit and proper words would tend much to excite the people hereunto, this advantage is loſt in the uſe of an unknown tongue, which is to no more purpoſe to him that underſtands it not, than if nothing at all was ſpoken. And what is here ſaid by the defenders of the *Romiſh* practice, doth generally confute it ſelf. Sometimes it is ſaid, (*r*) *Non eſt neceſſum à vulgo intelligi*, &c. that *it is not needful the people ſhould underſtand the Prayers and Hymns of the Church*, becauſe they are not intended to *inſtruct the people* by underſtanding the words, but *ſuavi melodia, majeſtateque actionis, by the ſweet melody and majeſty of the action*, to diſpoſe them to Religious reverence towards God. But if words in the worſhip of God be not needful to be *underſtood*, what need is there of any *words* at all, when grave actions and melodious ſounds are ſufficient? But if it be ſaid, that words being underſtood by the *Prieſts and learned men*, are uſeful to quicken their devotion, and to fix and unite their minds, in joyning together in the ſame ſupplications and praiſes in publick Service; it is eaſie to obſerve, that this might have the ſame effect upon the devoutly diſpoſed *peo-*

(*r*) Coſter. Enchir. c. 17. p. 496, 497.

The plea, that Prayers are not to inſtruct the people, conſidered,

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ple, if the Prayers and other parts of the Service, were in a language which they understood. And therefore it must either be granted, that it is unnecessary that any should *understand* the particular expressions of the Service, and then it is to no purpose to use *any language* at all; or else that it is desirable that all should understand it.

30. Sometimes we are told that it is requisite the publick Service should be in *Latin*,(*s*) because otherwise Priests; who come out of *other Countreys*, could not celebrate the Offices, *neque promiscuè laudes Dei decantare*, *nor jointly with others sing the praises of God.* But surely such Priests though they should not understand the language, may as well join in the praises of God, as the *people at home* can do in the language they understand not. And this charitable consideration towards *foreign Priests*, might be extended so far, as to prove (if it had any weight in it) that the service of the *Romish* Church, ought to be in *Arabick*, that if any Priests should come from those Eastern parts, where that language is understood, and the *Latin* is not; they might bear a part in the service. But if this would be ridiculous, when by this method the generality even of the *Priests at home* would not understand it, let it be considered what tolerable account can be given, why they should hinder the *generality of the people* from understanding it; especially when the Apostle himself hath so plainly determined, that when prayers or praises are in *an unknown tongue*, the unlearned Auditor cannot so well join therein, and his edification is thereby prejudiced, 1 *Cor.* 14. 16, 17. And what the Apostle speaks in that Chapter, doth plainly disallow the use of an unknown tongue in the *publick worship of God*, though they who spake, spake by the extraordinary *gift of tongues*; which thing was apt to excite the Christian Auditory, to a particular admiration of the Divine gifts, and so might well be esteemed an extraordinary *general help to devotion*, and adoration. And the particular exceptions, against this plain and full Apostolical testimony,

(*s*) Coster. Enchir. ubi sup.

and the care concerning foreign Priests.

The Apostolical precept observed.

ny,

ny, are so inconsiderable, and have been so oft refuted, that I think them not worthy to be named.

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31. But (*e*) several Writers of the *Romish* Church tell us, that it is not necessary, the people should *understand* the expressions of the publick prayers and praises (and consequently not *say Amen* to them) because these services are not *directed to them, but to God*: and they may partake of the *benefit* of these services, though they do not understand them, as an *ignorant Country man* may have received advantage from a Latin Speech spoken on his behalf to a Prince, by whom it is well understood; or as *absent persons* may be advantaged by the prayers, which others put up for them, though themselves do not hear them. But that this is an insufficient defence may appear, 1. Because though the *Lessons* are directed to the people, yet these also are read in a tongue they understand not. 2. Because the thing here to be considered, is not whether one may not be benefitted by *anothers prayers* and Religious addresses to God; which is supposed to be true, when we pray for one another: but we are here to take notice, whether the people ought not to bear a part, and to *join* in those great exercises of Religions piety, of prayers, thanksgiving and glorifying God, in the right performance of his publick worship and service. For the whole exercise of Divine worship, is not only to *seek for blessings* from God, but also to praise him and *glorifie* him, which the people cannot particularly join in, and go along with, unless they understand what is expressed in the service. And therefore if they ought to *join* therein; by being debarred from understanding it, they are hindred from these *acts of piety*, which they ought to perform, and God is deprived of a great part of that *glory* that is due to him; and consequently Religion and piety are much prejudiced thereby.

(*e*) Ledesim. de Scrip. qu. Ling. non legendis. c. 13. Coster. Ench. c. 17. Bellarm. de Verb. Dei, l. 2. c. 16.

Of the pretence that prayers are directed to God, and not to the people.

32. Now it may be reasonably presumed, that if the people have such *beings and souls*, as are indued with capacities of worshipping and glorifying God, they ought to be employed to this purpose: but if they have none such (which

The people are concerned to worship God.

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(which would be to ſuppoſe them not to be *Chriſtians or men*, and to be uncapable of doing acts of duty and Religion, and of receiving rewards) then will they not be concerned to attend Gods *publick worſhip*. And theſe pleas uſed by theſe Writers, are as plauſible, to excuſe their *abſence* from the publick Aſſemblies, as their *not underſtanding* the publick Service. But that the people are to join in the duties of Religious worſhip, is not only ſuppoſed by S. *Paul*, in that diſcourſe upon this ſubject, 1 *Cor.* 14. but may be proved from the *Pſalms*, and many other Scriptures, calling upon *all people*, to praiſe, and laud and glorifie God, and from S. *John*'s Viſions of the Goſpel-Church, where ſometimes the 144000, ſometimes ſo great a multitude as *no man could number*, are repreſented joyning together in the worſhip of God.

33. But a thing ſo manifeſt as this is, ſtands in need of no further proof, ſiince there are ſuch frequent precepts for *prayer*, *thanksgiving*, and *giving glory* to God, directed to all Chriſtians. And the Chriſtian Church from the beginning acknowledged the people to be much concerned, in the performing the publick worſhip of God. (*u*) *Juſtin Martyr* declares, how in the prayers before the Euchariſt, *all the Chriſtians together roſe up*, and preſented thoſe prayers, and in thoſe at the Euchariſt they joined their conſent by anſwering, *Amen*. *Tertullian* declaring the Chriſtian practice, ſaith, (*w*) *we go together to the Aſſembly and Congregation*, *ut ad Deum quaſi manu facta precationibus ambiamus orantes*, *that we may earneſtly call on God by prayers as with a joint ſtrength*; and *this force* (ſaith he) *is acceptable to God*. And before both theſe *Ignatius* urging and commending the publick ſervice, ſaid, (*x*) if the prayer of one or two hath ſo great a force, πόσῳ μᾶλλον ὅτε τῦ ἐπισκόπου καὶ πάσης τῆς ἐκκλησίας, *how much greater is that of the Biſhop and the whole Church?* And in the Primitive times ſometimes an *Amen*, and ſometimes other *reſponſals*, were directed to the people, in the ancient Liturgies. The reſult of all this is, that whereas the peoples actual joining

(*u*) Juſt. Apol. 2.

(*w*) Tert. Apol. c. 39.

(*x*) Ign. Ep. ad Eph.

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ing in the ſeveral parts of Gods worſhip is a great part of their *duty*, and the pious and devout performance of it, both tends to the *honour of God*, and to their edification; the preſent Church of *Rome* by eſtabliſhing their ſervice in a tongue not underſtood by the people, both *unjuſtly* and *impiouſly* hinders the due worſhip of God, and that piety of men which is conjoined with it; and derived from it.

Immoral Doctrines hinted at.

34. I might give a fourth inſtance, of the hindrances to an holy life, in the Church of *Rome*, from thoſe looſe *rules of practice* delivered by divers of their Doctors and Caſuiſts, and the allowance their rules give, to thoſe groſs enormities and heinous vices, which the Philoſophers and vertuous Pagans would abhor, being oppoſite to the *laws of nature*, and that honeſty which prevailed amongſt the better part of the *Gentiles*. Of ſuch things as theſe a large account hath been given, in the Myſtery of *Jeſuitiſm*, and ſeveral other Books: as their giving allowance to *perjury*, Murder, and other ſuch heinous ſins, upon ſleight occaſions, as to preſerve ones reputation, and the like. And what endeavours have been uſed by the doctrine of *probability*, and other methods, to uphold thoſe poſitions which debauch Morality, hath been manifeſted from the Books of Father *Bauny*, *Caramouel*, *Eſtrix*, and divers others. It is acknowledged that vigorous endeavours were uſed by ſome of their *Biſhops*, to ſuppreſs theſe wretched Principles of *immorality*, but there was as earneſt and vigorous diligence uſed to uphold the ſame by many Caſuiſts and Divines, eſpecially in *Flanders*, and *France*. I do not therefore charge theſe Principles upon the Church of *Rome* in general, but upon many Doctors therein. Some of theſe abominable and *immoral poſitions* were condemned by Pope *Alexander* the Seventh, and many were Sentenced by Pope *Innocent* the Eleventh, and the Inquiſition at *Rome*: of the latter of which I ſhall take ſome particular notice.

35. Amongſt

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35. Amongſt ſixty five Propoſitions, condemned in the *Vatican* (y) by the Pope and the Cardinals, the general Inquiſitors, theſe were ſome, (z) *That we dare not condemn him of mortal ſin, who ſhould but once in his whole life, put forth an act of the love of God,* (a) *We are not bound to love our Neighbour with an internal and formal act; We may ſatisfie the precept of loving our Neighbour by only external acts.* (b) *It is lawful for a Son to rejoice at his having murdered his Father when he was drunk, becauſe of the great riches thence accrewing to him by Inheritance.* (c) *It is ſufficient to have an act of faith once in the life time;* (d) *To call God to witneſs to a light lie, is not ſo great irreverence, that for it he either will or can damn a man.* Now ſuch horrid Poſitions as theſe, and many others in the ſame Decree, deſerve the ſevereſt Cenſure, and it may amaze any one, that ſuch things ſhould be aſſerted, by thoſe who take upon them to inſtruct others, in the Principles and Practices of Chriſtianity. And what wretched lives may they lead, whoſe practices are directed by ſuch Guides?

(y) Decree of Innoc. 11. March. 2. 1679.
(z) Prop. 5.
(a) Prop. 10, 11.
(b) Prop. 15.
(c) Prop. 17.
(d) 24.

36. Now though theſe Poſitions are condemned to be *at leaſt ſcandalous and pernicious in practice*, and therefore all perſons are in that Decree *ſtrictly forbidden to practiſe upon them*, and all who ſhall maintain them are declared to be under *the Sentence of Excommunication:* Yet this very Sentence is too kind and favourable to the Authors of theſe Poſitions upon a threefold account. *Firſt*, In that ſuch impious and irreligious Doctrines were not condemned as *falſe, wicked, blaſphemous or heretical*, but only as *at leaſt ſcandalous and pernicious in practice*, which is but a very mild Cenſure of theſe Doctrines themſelves; and ſpeaks no more againſt them, than is declared againſt ſome other poſitions contained in the ſame Decree, which are not ſo abominable. For inſtance, (e) *That the will cannot effect; that the aſſent of faith ſhould be more firm in it ſelf, than the weight of the reaſons which move to that aſſent do deſerve:* and (f) *That it is not uſury to require ſomething beſides the Principal, as being due out of benevolence and gratitude, but only when it is demanded*

(e) Prop. 19.
(f) Prop. 42.

demanded as due out of justice. For whatsoever may be said against these Positions, it is a gentle and easie Censure of the other, to put them in the same rank with these, and under no heavier condemnation. *Secondly*, In that the *authours* of these unchristian Doctrines, and those who till the time of this Decree, have taught them and maintained them, are not by this, nor so far as I can learn, by any other Decree brought under any *publick censure* which may embolden and encourage others, to vent other wicked Principles against common morality in time to come, though but with a little variation from the same. *Thirdly*, In that the *Books* in which these wicked Principles are contained, and owned, are not by this Decree, and I think by no other, *prohibited to be read*; no not so far as the holy Scriptures themselves are under a prohibition.

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Thoſe Doctrines and Practices are publickly declared and aſſerted in the Church of* Rome, *and are by the Authority thereof eſtabliſhed, which are highly derogatory to the juſt honour and dignity of our Saviour.

Diſhonour done to Chriſt

1. THoſe practices and opinions which *vilifie* the dignity, and *authority of Chriſt* are infamous, and bring a deſerved diſhonour upon the authours of them, and on them who embrace them. And as he is worthy of all glory, ſo his Church and the members thereof, are deſervedly *zealous of his honour*. But herein the *Romaniſts* miſcarry, which I ſhall manifeſt in ſome particulars.

by Invocating Saints,

2. *Firſt*, In their prayers and *ſupplications to Saints* and Angels: their practice herein, being not conſiſtent with the honour due to our Lord, as our *Advocate* and Interceſſor. This invocation of Saints, is declared by (*a*) the Council of *Trent* to be *good and profitable*. And in the Oath enjoined by *Pius* the Fourth, (*b*) to be taken of all the Clergy, a profeſſion is required, that the *Saints are to be worſhipped and invocated*: and in the publick Offices of the *Romiſh* Church, both in their *prayers*, and more eſpecially and fully in their *hymns*, ſupplications for all manner of Heavenly bleſſings, are put up unto them. (*c*) *Caſſander* indeed tells us, that theſe things are not done for any ſuch intent, *as if praying to them*, ſhould be thought *ſimply neceſſary to ſalvation*. And in the ſame diſcourſe he declares, that they did not *adjoin the Saints*, as *if God either could not or would not hearken, and ſhew mercy, unleſs they be interceſſors for it*. But it is well known, that his mild and moderate expreſſions, are diſpleaſing to the greater part of that Church. And however, though the error in *Doctrine*

(*a*) Seſſ. ult.

(*b*) in Bull. Pii 4.

(*c*) Caſſand. Conſult. de Cult. Sanct.

is

is the greater, when that is declared necessary which is not so; the error in *practice* is not the less, if in doing that which is on other accounts blameable, it be declared not necessary to be done.

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3. Now the blessed Jesus is constituted of God, our Advocate and *Intercessor*, that we may in *his name*, and through him, draw nigh to God: And it is part of his Kingly authority, and *headship* over his Church, to dispense those blessings for which we seek unto God in his name; and he is exalted to be *a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance and remission of sins*, Act. 5. 31. But in many Books of Devotion, used and approved by the Church of *Rome*, their addresses are much more *frequent to Saints*, and sometimes to Angels, and especially and most frequently to the *Blessed Virgin*, than to our Lord and Saviour himself; and to these they apply themselves, that by them they may find acceptance with God, and that by their merits they may obtain help, grace and blessing. And even the title of *intercessor* and *advocate* also, is oft-times given to them, both in the more ancient Offices, and in the present *Roman* Breviary, together with expressions of *trust* and confidence in their *merits*, frequently joined with them. On S. *Andrew*'s day they (*d*) pray with respect to him: *Sit apud te pro nobis perpetuus intercessor*; that he *may be with thee for us a perpetual Intercessor*. And the blessed Virgin is stiled (*e*) *our Advocate*. And they some times with respect to a Saint use such expressions as these in their addresses to God, *Ejus intercedentibus meritis, ab omnibus nos absolve peccatis*, (*f*) *Absolve us from all our sins, through the intercession of his merits*. And with respect to Pope *Nicholas*, both in the present *Roman* Breviary, and in the Office *secundum usum Sarum* which was most in use in this Kingdom before the Reformation, is a prayer for the sixth of *December*, that *by his merits and prayers we may be freed from the fire of Hell*. And of this nature numerous instances may be given. And such like expressions concerning the Saints, and applications to them, encroached so far upon our Saviours Intercession, and be-

and confidence in their intercession and merits.

(*d*) in Missal. sec. us. Sarum & in Brev. Rom.

(*e*) Br. Rom. ad complet. à Vesp. Trin.

(*f*) Ibid. Com. Confess. Pont.

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ing our Advocate, that with reſpect hereto, *Caſſander* ſays of divers of the *Romiſh* Communion; (g) *advocationis Chriſti officio obſcurato, Sanctos atque imprimis Virginem Mariam in illius locum ſubſtituerunt*, that the *Office of Chriſts Advocateſhip being obſcured by them, they ſubſtituted the Saints and principally the Virgin* Mary *in his place.*

(g) Caſſand. Conſult. de mer. & interceſ. Sanctorum.

They pretend that they only deſire their prayers.

4. But the moſt conſiderable men who write in defence of this practice declare, that they only invocate the Saints to obtain the *aſſiſtance of their prayers*, but *Firſt*, If this was true, and no more was either intended by the Church of *Rome*, or practiſed by its members, yet there is no aſſurance that particular Saints departed know our particular *wants and ſupplications* and deſires; and much more may they be unacquainted with that inward *devoutneſs*, and pious temper of ſoul, which doth qualifie men for the obtaining the favour of God, and his *heavenly bleſſings*. And a wiſe man would not think it reaſonable, to place any conſiderable dependance in a ſpecial caſe, upon the care and aſſiſtance of ſuch a friend, who is at a diſtance from him, and of whom he hath no ſufficient ground of confidence, that he knows any thing either of his need or of his ſpecial deſire from him. The ways aſſigned by the *Romaniſts*, to declare how the Saints departed are acquainted with things here below, eſpecially ſo far as to diſcern the ſpecial motions of the minds of all particular perſons, are but expreſſions of great words without evidence: and the *ſpeculum Trinitatis* may as well ſerve to ſhew that the *Angels* in glory, were from the beginning of their confirmation in happineſs acquainted with all *things future*, by ſeeing the face of our heavenly Father, (when yet our Lord declares, they knew not the time of the *day of Judgement*) as that the *Saints* in glory, have ſuch a clear underſtanding of things and perſons in this world. Now if they underſtand not our requeſts and deſires, ſupplications directed to them, are not only *imprudent*, but an abuſe of Religious Worſhip, by employing a conſiderable portion of it, and of our devotion therein, about that which at leaſt ſignifies nothing,

But 1. It is unknown to us, that they know our deſires.

but

but is *wholly useless*, and to no purpose. And to perform acts of Religion upon the uncertain supposition of this being true, (of which we can have no certain knowledge, and there is much to be said against it) is to shew our selves too forward to run the hazard, of being guilty of this miscariage.

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5. And whereas God and his Gospel doth instruct men, in the parts and *duties of Religion*, but hath given neither direction nor encouragement, to the invocation of Angels or Saints departed, or to perform any Religious Worship to them; it is no *duty* incumbent on men, to make such addresses to them; and in this case concerning the *object of Religious worship*, it is not their due to receive, what is not our duty to perform. And we may reasonably fear, lest God should account our giving such honour to those glorified creatures in Heaven, as to acknowledge them to know the *desires of the hearts* of men, and addressing our selves to them thereupon, to be a misplacing that honour, which is only due to himself, and our blessed Saviour; and this might bring us under his *displeasure*. And when I consider, how frequently the Apostle desires the prayers of the *Christian Churches on earth*, and directs them to *pray for one another*, and to send to the *Elders of the Church*, to obtain their prayers: I cannot but think, that he would have been as forward to have directed Christians, to seek for the prayers of *Saints departed* (of which he speaks nothing) if he had accounted that to be lawful and useful; and from hence it may seem highly probable if not certain, that the Souls departed, do *not understand*, and are not particularly affected, with the requests and desires of men here below. Besides this, though I conceive holy Angels may be *frequently present* in the Assemblies of the Christian Church, I cannot think it allowable, though I had special assurance of their presence at any particular time; to direct the acts of publick worship in that case sometimes to *God and Christ* and sometimes *to them*, in the same gesture of adoration, and especially in the use of such words of address to the Angels, (however they be understood) as may fitly

Our Religion gives no direction for such prayers.

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fitly be applied to Chriſt: For this would give too much of that *homage* to the Servant, which is due unto the Lord.

We greatly honour the Saints departed.

6. But we who do not direct our prayers and *Religious ſupplications* to Saints departed, have a high *honour* for them, endeavouring to follow their good *examples*, praiſing God for them, and hoping to be hereafter with them in the manſions of glory. And ſince their *goodneſs and love* is not diminiſhed, but increaſed by their departure, and they are ſtill members of the ſame body, I eſteem them to have *affectionate deſires* of the good of men upon Earth, and eſpecially of pious men, who are fellow-members with them. And I account it one great priviledge that I enjoy, from the *Communion of Saints*, that by reaſon of membership with the ſame body, I have an intereſt in the Religious ſupplications of all the truly *Catholick part*, of the diffuſive Church Militant upon Earth, and in the holy Services of the *triumphant part* thereof in Heaven. I can alſo willingly admit what (*h*) S. *Cyprian* ſometimes expreſſeth, that departed friends have a particular deſire of the good of their *ſurviving relations*; and what in another place he recommends (*i*), that *departing Chriſtians* continue their affectionate ſenſe of, and prayers for, the *diſtreſſed part* of the Church on Earth. But upon the foregoing conſiderations, this will not warrant Religious addreſſes to be directed to theſe Saints.

(*h*) Cyp. de Mortalitate, Magnus illic nos charorum numerus expectat, parentum, fratrum, filiorum —— copioſa turba — adhuc de noſtra ſalute ſollicita.

(*i*) Epiſt. 57. ad Cornel.

The Papiſts do directly pray for bleſſings to the Saints.

7. *Secondly*, The *petitions* uſed in the *Romiſh* Church, in their ſupplications to the Saints, do plainly expreſs more than their deſiring them to *pray for them*. I ſhall not inſiſt on the high extravagances, in divers Books of Devotions, and in the Offices formerly uſed in ſome particular Churches, as that in the *Miſſale ſec. uſum Sarum* to the Virgin *Mary* (*k*), *Potes enim cuncta, ut mundi Regina, & jura Cum nato omnia decernis in ſæcla, Thou canſt do all things as the Queen of the World, and thou with thy Son determineſt all rights for ever*; which, with many expreſſions of as high a nature,

(*k*) In Nativit. B. Mariæ.

nature, place a further *confidence* in the Saints, and expectation from them, than meerly to be helped by their prayers. But I shall instance in two or three expressions, in the present *Roman* Breviary. They apply themselves to S. *Peter*, (*l*) *Peccati vincula Resolve tibi potestate tradita, Qua cunctis cœlum verbo claudis, aperis; Loose the bonds of our sins, by that power which is delivered to thee, whereby by thy word, thou shutteſt and openeſt heaven to all men.* And to all the Apostles, they direct their prayers on this manner (*m*) *Qui cœlum verbo clauditis, Seraſque ejus ſolvitis, nos à peccatis omnibus Solvite juſſu quæſumus, Quorum præcepto ſubditur Salus & languor omnium, Sanate ægros moribus, nos reddentes virtutibus; Ye who by your word do ſhut up Heaven, and looſe the barrs thereof, we beſeech you by your command looſe us from all our ſins, ye to whoſe command the health, and the weakneſs of all is ſubject, heal thoſe who are ſick in their life and practice, reſtoring us to vertue.* I am apprehenſive, that many may think theſe inſtances the leſs blameable, becauſe the expreſſions of them have a manifeſt reſpect to the commiſſion and authority, which Chriſt gave to his Apoſtles, in the *keyes* of the Kingdom of Heaven, and the power of *remitting* and retaining ſin: and the *other Apoſtles* are here owned to have the power of the keys as well as S. *Peter*. But that our Saviours Commiſſion to them, referred wholly to the Government of his Church upon Earth, is ſufficiently manifeſt from thoſe words both to S. *Peter*, and to all the Apoſtles, *whatſoever thou, or ye ſhall bind on earth —— and whatſoever ye ſhall looſe on Earth.* And though the Apoſtles are eminently exalted in the glory of the other world; yet to acknowledge them in Heaven, to *acquit* or *condemn* all men, and to receive them into Heaven, or exclude them from it, by their *command*, and by that *power*, which is committed to them, muſt include an owning them to be the full and compleat *Judges of the quick and the dead.*

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(*l*) Br. Rom. Jun. 29. in Hymn.

(*m*) Br. Rom. in Commun. Apoſt. & in Feſto S. Andr.

8. And ſince the *Romiſh* Church aſſerts all their Biſhops, to derive and enjoy the ſame authority which was commit-

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ted to S. *Peter*; and if this be not only an authority upon earth, but in the future ſtate; then all their *deceaſed Popes* (and much to the ſame purpoſe may be urged concerning all *Prieſts*) muſt ſtill enjoy the ſame *heavenly power*, which they aſcribe to S. *Peter*, though there is great reaſon to fear, that divers of themſelves never entred into Heaven. To theſe, other numerous inſtances might be added, of their prayers to the *Bleſſed Virgin*, and to other Saints for *grace*, *pardon*, *protection*, and to be received by them at the *hour of death*: and ſuch inſtances have been largely and fully produced, by ſome of the worthy Writers of our own Church, and *Chamier*, and other Proteſtant Authors, and particularly by *Chemnitius* in his *Examen Conc. Trid.*

9. But when Cardinal *Bellarmine* diſcourſed of theſe ſupplications to the Saints, he particularly inſtanced in ſome, as that to the Virgin *Mary*, *Tu nos ab hoſte protege, & hora mortis ſuſcipe*; *do thou defend us from the enemy, and receive us at the hour of death*; but will have them all to be underſtood, as deſiring only the *benefit of their prayers*. But becauſe the words they uſe, do not ſeem to favour this ſenſe of his, he tells us (*n*) *Notandum eſt nos non agere de verbis, ſed de ſenſu verborum*; *It muſt be noted that we diſpute not about the words themſelves, but about the ſenſe and meaning of them*. Now I acknowledge it fit, that words ſhould be taken in their true ſenſe, being interpreted alſo with as much candor as the caſe will admit. Yet I ſhall obſerve, 1. That it cannot well be imagined, that when they expreſly declare their hopes, of obtaining their petitions to the Saints, by their *command*, and by their *power which is committed to them*, which is owned ſufficient for the performing theſe requeſts, as in the inſtances I mentioned, no more ſhould be intended, than to deſire the aſſiſtance of their *prayers*; and this gives juſt reaſon to ſuſpect, that more is alſo meant in other expreſſions and prayers, according to the moſt plain import of the words. 2. That though ſome of the Doctors of the *Roman* Church, would

(*n*) Bellarm. de Sanct. Beatitud. l. 1. c. 9.

would put this construction upon the words of their prayers; yet it is manifest the *people* understand them, in the most obvious sense, so as to repose their *main confidence* upon the Saints themselves and their merits. This may appear from the words I above cited, *n.* 3. from *Cassander*, who also tells us that (*o*) *homines non mali*; *men who were none of the worser sort, did chuse to themselves certain Saints for their Patrons*, and *in eorum meritis atque intercessione, plus quam in Christi merito fiduciam posuerunt*; *they placed confidence in their merits and intercession, more than in the merits of Christ.*

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(*o*) Cass. Consult. de Mer. & Interc. Sanct.

10. The invocation of Saints and Angels will appear the more unaccountable, by considering what is contained in the holy Scriptures, and the ancient practice of the Church of God. In the *Old Testament* there is no worshiping of Angels directed, though the Law was given by their *ministration*, and that state was more particularly subject to them, than the state of the Gospel is, as the Apostle declares, *Heb.* 2. 5. In the Book of *Psalms*, which were the Praises and Hymns used in the publick Worship of the *Jews*, there is no address made to any departed Saint, or even to any Angel; though the *Jewish* Church had no *advocate with the Father* in our nature, which is a peculiar priviledge of the Christian Church, since the Ascension of our Saviour. That place in the Old Testament, which may seem to look most favourably towards the invocation of an Angel. *Gen.* 48. 16. *The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the Lads*, is by many ancient Christian Writers not understood of a *created Angel.* But however it is to be observed that these words were part of the *benediction of Jacob* to the Sons of *Joseph.* Now a benediction frequently doth not exclude a prayer to the thing or person spoken of, but a desire of the good expressed, with an implicite *application to God*, that he would grant it. Thus in the next words, *Gen.* 48. 16. *Let my name be named on them, and the name of my Fathers Abraham and Isaac*; which contain no prayer to the names of his Fathers, or to his own.

No such practice in the Old Testament,

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So *Iſaac* bleſſed *Jacob*, Gen. 27. 29. uſing theſe expreſſions, *Let People ſerve thee and Nations bow down unto thee.* And this Clauſe of *Jacob*'s Benediction is well paraphraſed by one of the (*p*) *Chaldee* Paraphraſts, *Let it be well pleaſing before him* (God) *that the Angel*, &c. But the Holy Angels themſelves declared againſt the giving to them any acts of Worſhip, and refuſed to receive any ſuch, both under the *Old Teſtament*, Judg. 13. 16, 17, 18. and the *New*, Rev. 19. 10. ch. 22. 9. Yea the Apoſtle cautions againſt the worſhipping of Angels, *Col.* 2. 18. and the ancient Church prohibited it by her (*q*) Canons.

(*p*) Targ. Jonath. in Gen. 48. 16.

(*q*) Conc. Laodic. c. 35. *nor in the New*,

11. And in the Goſpel God himſelf whoſe right it is to direct and appoint in *whoſe name* we ſhould approach unto him, hath directed us to come to him, in the name of our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, and hath encouraged us thereto, by promiſing that what we ſo *ask he will give*, Joh. 16. 23, and that our Lord himſelf *will do* what we ſo ask, *Joh.* 14. 13, 14. And that Chriſt is *able to ſave to the uttermoſt thoſe that come unto God by him, and he ever lives to make interceſſion for them* Heb. 7. 25. And what further encouragement need be given or deſired? But not a word is ſpoken, to direct us to any deceaſed *Saint, or to any Angel*, to make any of them our Interceſſor. And this is the great encouragement propoſed to us in approaching to God, that having a *great High-Prieſt who is paſſed into the Heavens, Jeſus the Son of God, and who can be touched with the feeling of our Infirmities, we may come boldly to the Throne of Grace*, Hebr. 4. 14, 15, 16. and that *if any Man ſin we have an Advocate with the Father Jeſus Chriſt the Righteous* 1 Joh. 2. 1. And in the Precepts our Saviour gives, to guide our Prayer and Worſhip, he directs us to referr them only to God, *Matt.* 4. 10. *Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve*; and Luke 11. 2. *when ye pray, ſay, Our Father which art in Heaven.*

12. And though S. *Stephen ſuffered Martyrdom* in a ſhort time after our Saviour's Aſcenſion; and S. *James* (whoſe Martyrdom (*r*) *Baronius* places in the forty fourth year

(*r*) Annal. Eccl. an. 44. n. 2.

year of Christ) and the *Blessed Virgin* also in all probability, died before the writing of any part of the New Testament: Yet in all the New Testament where there are such frequent expressions of *praying to* and calling upon God, with Supplications to our Blessed Saviour, there is not the least intimation of any adoration, or invocation, to these *eminent Saints* or any others who were departed. And yet S. *Paul* assures us, that some of the Brethren who were Witnesses of our Saviour's Resurrection *were fallen asleep* before the time of his writing the first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 6. And it hath been at large observed, and proved by sufficient evidence, that no genuine Writer of the first Centuries hath any thing in him to express or favour invocation of Saints. This is shewed by (*s*) the Bishop of *Lincoln*, for the first *three hundred years*, and (*t*) *Vossius* speaks of *three hundred and seventy*. After which time, some expressions were used, which made way for this practice; but yet no such thing was brought into any *publick Liturgy*, for some hundred years after.

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(*s*) in Letter of Invocation of Saints.
(*t*) Voss. Thes. Theol. Disp. 10.

13. It may be here added, that if we consider the *Saints they invocate*, besides what Objections may be made against particular Persons, it may be noted, that the general Worship given to Saints, hath respect to all those who are *Canonized* by the *Roman* Bishop: And there is no sufficient reason to believe that all such are *truly Saints*. The form of Canonization declares the Person canonized (*u*) *ut Sanctum à Christi fidelibus venerandum*, that he is to be worshipped of Christians as a Saint. That none may receive *publick adoration* but they who are canonized by the Pope, is owned by (*w*) *Bellarmine*; who also declares, that (*x*) *it is to be believed, that the Pope doth not erre in Canonizing*. But he who believes the truth of this, must frame an higher notion of the *Papal Infallibility* than that Cardinal hath given us. For he tells us (*y*) it is *a thing agreed betwixt Catholicks and Hereticks, that the Pope as Pope*

Of the Canonization of Saints.

(*u*) Sacr. Cerem.
(*w*) De Sanct. Beat. c. 19.
(*x*) ib. c. 9.
(*y*) de Rom. Pont. l. 4. c. 2.

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and joined with all his Council, may err in matters of Fact, and ſuch as depend on the *information and teſtimony of men*. He tells us indeed in the ſame place, that in propounding *matters of Faith*, or enjoyning *rules of Duty* and Practice, he cannot err. But ſince no matter of *Fact* is more lyable to miſtake, than to diſcern whether a perſon be eminently and ſincerely *holy* or no; eſpecially as they proceed in the Church of *Rome*, where the Teſtimonies concerning their *working Miracles* are of great moment in this caſe; it may therefore according to the Cardinals own poſition, be thought at leaſt doubtful, whether the Pope may not miſtake in judging a Man to be *truly a Saint*, and then it may ſeem hard to believe, that all muſt needs be Saints whom he declares to be ſuch by *Canonization*.

Of denying the Cup in the Euchariſt to the Laity,

14. A Second Inſtance I ſhall here conſider, is, That they at *Rome* debarr the people of the *Cup in the Holy Communion*, which was manifeſtly one part of that Holy Sacrament, as it was inſtituted, and commanded to be received, by our Saviour. And therefore this contains an Oppoſition to what was eſtabliſhed by Chriſt. In the Church of *Rome*, both the *Laity* and the *Clergy* (except in ordinary Communions, only the *perſon conſecrating* or, as they ſpeak the *conficient Prieſt*) receive only the one element in the *Euchariſt*, and not the other of the Cup. And though the Council of (*b*) *Trent* wholly waved the determining this Queſtion, concerning the Cup, *Whether it might be granted to any of the Laity?* And referred this wholly to the prudence of the Pope, who hath ſtill continued the former uſe in one kind; yet that Council freely declared their ſenſe, concerning the Doctrines and Rules of Duty, referring to the Sacrament. Here it declares, that (*c*) the *Laity and the Clergy*, who do not conſecrate, are obliged by *no Divine Precept to take the Euchariſt in both kinds*, and that it cannot be *doubted ſalva fide*, but that the Communion *in one kind, is ſufficient to Salvation*; and that *whole Chriſt and the true Sacrament is taken under either kind alone*,

(*b*) Seſſ. 22. in fin.

(*c*) Seſſ. 21. c. 1.

alone, and therefore they who ſo receive, are *deprived of no grace neceſſary to Salvation.* And they ſo declare theſe things, with others concerning the Sacrament, that if any perſon ſhall ſpeak contrary thereto, even to ſay that the *Catholick Church was not moved by juſt* (or ſufficient) *reaſons*, in ordering the Laity and Clergy who do not conſecrate, *to communicate only under the Species of bread, he ſhall be under an Anathema*; and they alſo forbid all Chriſtians for the future —— *ne de iis aliter credere audeant*; *that they do not dare to believe otherwiſe of theſe things.* But that which is here to be enquired and examined is, Whether the Sacrament of the Euchariſt ought not according to the *inſtitution of Chriſt* and by his authority, to be adminiſtred in *both kinds?*

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15. That Chriſt did *inſtitute* this Sacrament, in both kinds of Bread and Wine, is ſo plain from the words of its Inſtitution, that this is acknowledged in the (*d*) Council of *Trent.* And that he gave a particular *command* to all Communicants to receive the Cup, ſeems plainly owned in one of the Hymns of the *Roman* Church. (*e*) *Dedit fragilibus corporis ferculum, Dedit & triſtibus ſanguinis poculum, Dicens, Accipite quod trado vaſculum, Omnes ex eo bibite. Sic Sacrificium iſtud inſtituit. He gave the entertainment of his body to the Frail, to the Sad he gave the Cup of his blood, ſaying, Take this Cup which I deliver, drink ye all of it. Thus did he inſtitute that Sacrifice.* Theſe expreſſions have a particular reſpect to that Command concerning the Cup, *Matt.* 26. 27. *Drink ye all of it.* And it may be further obſerved, that thoſe words in the Inſtitution, *Do this in remembrance of me*, are a Precept, which hath ſpecial reſpect to the *receiving* both the kinds, both the *Bread and the Cup.* For though I acknowledge theſe words, *Do this*, to eſtabliſh the whole Inſtitution, that as (*f*) S. *Cyprian* expreſſeth their ſenſe, *ut hoc faciamus quod fecit & Dominus, —— & ab eo quod Chriſtus & docuit, & fecit, non recedatur*; that *we ſhould do what our Lord did, and ſhould not depart from what Chriſt taught and did*: Yet theſe words have a more

againſt Chriſts Inſtitution:

(*d*) Ubi ſup. c. 1.

(*e*) Sacris, &c. in Brev. Ro. in feſto Corp. Chriſt.

(*f*) Cyp. Ep. 63.

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more eſpecial regard to the diſtribution or *participation* of the Sacrament. For *Do this*, &c. in S. *Luke*, and S. *Paul*, comes in the place of *take, eat*, &c. in S. *Matt.* and S. *Mark*: and in theſe words of S. *Paul*, *Do this as oft as ye drink it in remembrance of me*; the words, *as oft as ye drink it*, do plainly import thus much, that the Command *do this*, in that place, doth peculiarly reſpect the *receiving the Cup*.

16. This *Inſtitution of Chriſt* was anciently even in the Church of *Rome*, acknowledged to be ſo fair a Rule to all Chriſtians, that from hence (*g*) Pope *Julius* undertook to correct the *various abuſes*, which had in ſome places been entertained: Inſomuch that he declares againſt delivering the *Bread dipt in the Cup*; upon this reaſon, becauſe it is contrary to what is teſtified in the *Goſpels*, concerning the Maſter of truth, who when he commended to his Apoſtles, his Body and his Blood, *Seorſum panis, ſeorſum & calicis commendatio memoratur*; his *Recommendation of the Bread and of the Cup* is related to be each of them *ſeparate* and diſtinct. And that the *Apoſtolical Church* did give the Cup to the Laity, is plain from the Apoſtles words to the *Corinthians*, where he uſeth this as an Argument, to all particular Chriſtians, againſt communicating in any Idolatrous Worſhip, 1 Cor. 10. 21. *ye cannot drink the Cup of the Lord and the Cup of Devils*: And the ſame will appear manifeſt from other expreſſions hereafter mentioned. And the Council of *Trent* (*h*) owns, that *from the beginning of Chriſtianity, the Sacrament was given in both kinds*. But they following much the ſteps of the Council of *Conſtance*, account neither the Inſtitution of Chriſt, nor the practice of the ancient Church, to be in this caſe any neceſſary guide, but they declare, the cuſtom then received, to be changed upon *juſt reaſons*.

(*g*) de Conſecrat. di. 2. c. 7. Cum omne.

(*h*) Seſſ. 21. c. 2.

17. But that the Argument from the Inſtitution and *Command of Chriſt*, might be eluded, and a Miſt caſt before the Sun, divers *Romaniſts*, and particularly (*i*) *Bellarmine*, declare, that Chriſts command, *drink ye all of it*, was given to the Apoſtles only, and not to all Communicants.

(*i*) de Euchar. l. 4. c. 25. *which binds all Communicants.*

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which binds all Communicants.

To which I answer 1. That the Apostles, at the time of the Institution of this Sacrament, were *not consecrating*, but *communicating*; and therefore the Command given to them, as receiving the Sacrament, is a rule for *Communicants*, and can by no reason be restrained to the *consecrating Priest*: And indeed the ancient Church made no such distinction *in this case*, between Priest and People, but acknowledged, as (*k*) S. *Chrysostome* expresseth it, that the *same Body is appointed for all, and the same Cup*: And agreeable hereunto are the Articles of the Church of *England*, which declare (*l*) that *both the parts of the Lord's Sacrament, by Christ's Ordinance and Commandment, ought to be ministred to all Christian men alike*. 2. That this device would serve as effectually (if it were considerable) to take away the *Bread*, with the Cup, from the *people*, that so no part of Christ's Institution should belong to them. 3. The *Command of Christ*, with the reason annexed, *Matt.* 26. 27, 28. *Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the Remission of Sins*; doth give sufficient light to discern, to whom this Precept is designed; to wit, to all them, who desire to partake in the Communion of the *blood* of the New Testament, for the *Remission of sins*, and that is to all Communicants in that Sacrament. 4. S. *Paul* 1 Cor. 11. 25, 26. plainly applys Christ's Command, concerning *the Cup*, to all who come to the Holy Communion; in that after the rehearsal of that part of the Institution, concerning the Cup, he immediately says to the *Corinthians*, *For as oft as ye eat this Bread and drink this Cup, ye do shew the Lord's Death till he come.* And he re-inforceth this Command of partaking of the Cup, indefinitely to all who are to Communicate, *v.* 28. *Let a Man* (not only the Priest) *examine himself, and so let him eat of this Bread, and drink of this Cup.*

(*k*) Chrys. Hom. 18. in 2 Epist. ad Corinth.

(*l*) Art. 30.

18. But here, the Council of *Trent* acquaints us with a claim of the *Churches authority* and power in the Sacrament (*m*) *in dispensatione Sacramentorum, salva illorum substantia, statuere, vel mutare; to appoint and change things,*

(*m*) Ubi sup. c. 2.

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No power of the Church can take away the Cup from the People.

in diſpenſing the Sacraments, ſtill preſerving their ſubſtance. And they ſeem to intimate, that the Communion in both kinds, is not of the *ſubſtance* of the Sacrament, becauſe *whole Chriſt* and all neceſſary grace is contained under one kind. But 1. If by being of the *ſubſtance* of the Sacrament, we mean all that is enjoined by Chriſt's Precept, and is neceſſary for the *right adminiſtration* of the Sacrament, according to his Inſtitution: The uſe of both kinds is proved to be of this nature; and therefore to change this, is not within the Churches authority. 2. They may as well ſay, that *whole Chriſt* is in *one kind*, and therefore there needs no *conſecration of the Cup*, as that therefore there needs no *diſtribution*: And ſo the Cup may be wholly rejected, with as much Piety, as the Laity are now deprived of it. 3. What is contained in the Sacrament, is contained in it according to the *Will of Chriſt*, and his Inſtitution; and thereby the *Bread is the Communion of the body of Chriſt*, and *the Cup is the Communion of the blood of Chriſt*, 1 Cor. 10.16. And (*n*) *Durandus* did truly aſſert, that the *blood of Chriſt is not Sacramentally* in the Hoſt; becauſe the *Bread ſignifies the Body*, and not the Blood. So he with ſomewhat more to this purpoſe. And this is the more conſiderable, becauſe in the Holy Euchariſt, the *death of Chriſt* is repreſented, and in the Cup, his Blood, as ſhed. And *Gelaſius*, who was once Biſhop of *Rome*, when he heard that ſome received the *Bread only and not the Cup*, declared what then it ſeems was Catholick Doctrine at *Rome*, that they muſt either *receive the whole Sacrament, or be rejected from the whole*, becauſe (*o*) *diviſio unius ejuſdem myſterii ſine grandi Sacrilegio non poteſt provenire*; the *dividing one and the ſame Sacrament cannot be without grand Sacriledge*. Which words contain a more full and plain cenſure of what ſince his time is practiſed in the Church of *Rome*, than can be evaded by the ſtrained and frivolous Interpretations, either of *Gratian*, of *Binius*, or *Baronius*. And we have alſo much greater authority than his: For beſides what I have above mentioned, this uſe of the *Cup* was part of what S. *Paul*

(*n*) Ration. l.4.c.54.n.13.

(*o*) de Conſec. Diſt. c. 2. comperimus.

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received of the Lord, and delivered to the *Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 11. 23——25. and it was matter of praise in the *Corinthians*, that they *kept the ordinances as he delivered them*, v. 2.

19. And what is asserted in the Council of *Trent*, that the Church had *just reason*, to order the Communion in one kind; and what others say, that it is *more profitable* to Christians, and contains an honour and *reverence* to that Ordinance; must suppose that their wisdom is greater than our Saviour's, who did not know or consider, with so much *prudence* as they do, what is fit to be appointed, and established in his Ordinance. And since the Holy Ghost declared, both the Bread and the Cup to be appointed *to shew forth Christs death till he come*, 1 Cor. 11. 26. they must therefore be both used to this purpose, *until his second coming*, and then no power was left to any Church, to alter and *change* this institution. And whilst some pretend *reverence* to God, and this Sacrament, in taking away the Cup from the people, it would be considered, that there can be no honour to God in acts of *disobedience*. But if pretences of honouring God, in acts of disobedience, could render actions commendable, *Sauls Sacrificing* must have passed for a pious attempt, and the Doctrine of the *Pharisees*, for the observing their *vow of Corban*, must have been esteemed a Religious assertion.

Of the propitiatory Sacrifice of the Mass.

20. A third Instance I shall consider, is their pretending to offer a *proper expiatory Sacrifice*, of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Mass; which is derogatory to Christs own *Priestly oblation*, whereby he once offered himself a compleat Sacrifice of expiation. But the (*p*) Council of *Trent* declares, that in the Mass is *Sacrificium verè propitiatorium*, a truly propitiatory Sacrifice, and that it is offered both for *the sins, punishments and other necessities of the living Christians, and also for the dead in Christ, who are not fully purged*. And it pronounced an *Anathema* against him, who shall say, *in missa non offerri Deo verum*

(*p*) Sess 22. c. 2.

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& proprium ſacrificium; that in the Maſs is not offered to God a true and proper Sacrifice, or that it ought not to be offered for the quick and the dead. And they declare it to be the very *ſame Sacrifice which was offered upon the Croſs.* And the (*q*) *Roman* Catechiſm ſaith, that this Sacrifice of the Maſs, doth not only contain an *efficacious meriting*, but a ſatisfying alſo; and even as Chriſt by his paſſion did *both merit and ſatisfie.* So they who offer this Sacrifice do ſatisfie. And the Council of (*r*) *Trent* will have it offered for ſatisfactions.

(*q*) Catech. ad paroch. jux dec. Trid. p. 247.

(*r*) Anath. 3.

21. Now it is acknowledged, that that *perfect Sacrifice*, which Chriſt himſelf once offered, is lively *repreſented* and eminently *commemorated* in the holy Communion, and the benefits thereof are there received by the worthy Communicant: and on this account this Sacrament eſpecially, is a *Chriſtian Sacrifice* in a large ſenſe; as that *Jewiſh* Feaſt was called the *Paſſeover*, as it was a memorial and repreſentation of the original Paſſeover, when the deſtroying Angel paſſed by the Houſes of the *Iſraelites*. And it may be called a *Sacrifice*, as it contains the performance of ſuch a chief part of *ſervice*, and worſhip to God, as renders them who do it aright, pleaſing and acceptable to God. And therein we *preſent our ſelves* to God, with our *homage and oblations*; and our praiſes, and ſupplications, that *we and the whole Church may obtain remiſſion of ſins, and all other benefits of Chriſts paſſion.* And ſuch great actions of Religion, are in a more large ſenſe, though not in a ſtrict ſenſe, frequently called *Sacrifices*, both in the holy Scriptures, as in *Pſal.* 51. 17. *Rom.* 12. 1. *Phil.* 4. 18. *Heb.* 13. 15, 16. 1 Pet. 2. 5. and frequently in the Fathers, as may be ſhewed from *Juſtin Martyr*, *Tertullian*, *Clemens Alexandrinus* and divers others. But this ſenſe is ſo far from ſatisfying the Council of *Trent*, that it pronounceth (*ſ*) an *Anathema* againſt him, who ſhall ſay, it is only a *Sacrifice of praiſe and thanksgiving*, or a *commemoration of the Sacrifice of Chriſt on the Croſs*, and *not a propitiatory Sacrifice*.

The Euchariſt how a Chriſtian Sacrifice.

(*ſ*) ubi ſup.

22. Now

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22. Now that there is not, nor can be in the Sacrament, a *proper Sacrificing* Chriſt's Body and Blood, to make expiation for the ſins of men, may appear from four Conſiderations.

Conſ. 1. *The Sacrifice of the Maſs derogates from the death and paſſion of Chriſt,*

Conſ. 1. Chriſt's *once offering* himſelf a Sacrifice, was ſo compleat, that it neither needs, nor admits of any *reiterating*, or that this or any other propitiatory, or *expiatory Sacrifices*, ſhould be again offered. This is obſerved by the Apoſtle, to be one *excellency* of the Sacrifice of Chriſt once offered, above the *legal Sacrifices*; that whereas by reaſon of the imperfection of them, the Prieſts offered oftentimes the ſame Sacrifices, Chriſt by *one offering had fully perfected* his work; and the Apoſtle therefore expreſsly ſaith, he ſhould *not offer himſelf often*, Heb. 9. 25, 26, 27, 28. *chap.* 10. 10—14. (*t*) *Bellarmine* was ſo apprehenſive, of the force and reaſonableneſs of this conſideration, *with reſpect to the Maſs*, and the frequent *repetition* thereof, that he thought it neceſſary to aſſert, that the Sacrifice of the Maſs is not of *infinite value*; for ſaith he, *ſi miſſæ valor infinitus eſſet, fruſtra multæ miſſæ; if the value of the Sacrifice of the Maſs was infinite, it would be in vain that there ſhould be many Maſſes.* But he might alſo have diſcerned, that upon the ſame reaſon, he would be obliged to acknowledge, in derogation from the Sacrifice of Chriſt upon the *Croſs*, and in oppoſition to the teſtimony of the Scriptures, that that offering of the *Sacrifice of Chriſt*, which he himſelf made in our nature, was but of a finite value, and not compleat, ſo as thereby to *perfect for ever them who are ſanctified*; becauſe if this had been effected by that one offering, it would be in vain to have repeated offerings of that Sacrifice.

(*t*) de Miſſa, l. 2. c. 4.

23. But others of their Writers, entertain different notions and opinions from this, and conclude (*u*) that the *merits of the Sacrifice of the Euchariſt* muſt be *infinite*, becauſe they are the *ſame merits*, with thoſe of the Sacrifice upon the Croſs. And this muſt needs be ſo, according to the

(*u*) Barrad. Concord. Evangel. Tom. 4. l. 3. c. 16.

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Council of *Trent*, which declares (*w*) it to be the *very ſame Sacrifice*, which *is now offered by the Prieſt*, and which was then *offered upon the Croſs*, and differeth only in the *manner of offering*, and then its merit and vertue muſt be the ſame. Now this conception of the value of the *Sacrifice of the Euchariſt*, in aſſerting it to be ſo compleatly propitiatory, doth not only *derogate* from the Sacrifice of Chriſt, which himſelf offered upon the Croſs, but in truth it makes it ſo *void*, as to take away any *neceſſity* thereof. For ſince our Lord inſtituted, and conſecrated the *Euchariſt* before his death; if he had therein offered himſelf a *compleat expiatory Sacrifice*, then the work of *redemption* and expiation, muſt have been fully performed, before that great work of his *paſſion upon the Croſs*; and conſequently his death upon the Croſs, as a Sacrifice muſt be in vain. This was (*x*) again and again urged in the Council of *Trent*, by ſome whoſe apprehenſions were not agreeable to what that Council determined. Nor can it be otherwiſe ſolidly anſwered, than by acknowledging, that our Lord when he inſtituted and celebrated the Euchariſt, did not in that action, properly *offer* himſelf a *propitiatory Sacrifice*. And whereas in the Inſtitution of the Euchariſt, our Saviour ſpake of his *blood which is ſhed*, not only divers particular Writers of the *Romaniſts* own the expreſſion of the preſent tenſe, to denote what was future, but ſoon to be accompliſhed; but even the Vulgar *Latin*, both in S. *Matthew* and S. *Luke*, expreſſeth it *effundetur*, *ſhall be ſhed*, to which agreeth the expreſſing the ſame in the Canon of the Maſs. The like may be obſerved concerning the phraſe of his Body being given, or broken, which the Vulgar *Latin* alſo in the words of the inſtitution, 1 *Cor.* 11. 24. renders *tradetur*, *ſhall be given*. Nor is it either pious or reaſonable to think, that the Euchariſt celebrated by an *ordinary Prieſt*, muſt be more properly and fully an expiatory and propitiatory Sacrifice, than that which was celebrated by *Chriſt himſelf*, in the firſt inſtitution of it; when his act then was made

(*w*) Seſſ. 22. c. 2.

and makes them void.

(*x*) Hiſt. Conc. Trident. p. 443 & 451.

made the Rule to guide theirs, by his giving this commandment; *Do this in remembrance of me.*

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24. *Conf.* 2. A proper Sacrifice of Christ's Body and Blood, is not now *capable of being offered,* in the Eucharist. Indeed that Sacrament beareth a particular respect to the *death of Christ*, to his Body as broken, and his Blood as shed; and therein his *death is shewed forth*, 1 Cor. 11. 26. But after his resurrection, he *dieth no more*; *death hath no more dominion over him*, Rom. 6. 9. And therefore his Body as having been once *really dead*, and his Blood as *once shed*, may be commemorated, and represented in the Eucharist. But there is now no exhibiting his Body and Blood in that Sacrament *really dead* (which cannot be) and so properly offered a Sacrifice to God. And the defenders of the *Romish* Sacrifice, seem here to be put to a great loss.

Conf. 2. *The body of Christ is not now capable of being Sacrificed.*

25. In (*y*) *Bellarmin*'s definition of a Sacrifice, the last clause thereof declares that the thing sacrificed, *ritu mystico consecratur & transmutatur*; is by *a mystical right consecrated and changed.* And explaining the former of these, he saith, it must *ex prophana fieri sacra*; *of a prophane thing be made sacred*, and that *Sacrificare is Sacrum facere.* But though the *elements* of the Eucharist, before the consecration may be called *profane things*, or not sacred, and so may be *consecrated* by the Priest; the glorious *body of Christ* is capable of no such thing. And explaining the latter clause, he saith it must be *changed*, so, *ut destruatur, that it may be destroyed*, or that *desinat esse quod ante erat, that it may cease to be what it was before*: and this is as far from agreeing with the *uncorruptible body* of Christ as the other; and therefore the Cardinal, in making and explicating this definition, seems to have laid aside, or else to have forgotten the interest he was to maintain.

(*y*) de Miss. l. 1. c. 2.

26. And (*z*) *Barradius* acutely tells us, that *immolatio, oblatio*, and *consumptio*; *slaying, offering* and *consuming*, are

(*z*) Conc. Evang. To. 4. l. 3. c. 6.

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are the things eſſential to a Sacrifice; and he undertakes ſo great an adventure, as to ſhew, how all of them, even the firſt, and the laſt, may be affirmed concerning the *body of Chriſt* in the Sacrifice of the *Maſs*. He ſaith, that as a *lamb is ſlain*, when the blood is ſeparated from the body *by a knife*: Chriſt is here ſlain, when *vi conſecrationis ſanguis Chriſti à Corpore Chriſti ſeparatur*; by *force of the Conſecration, the blood of Chriſt is ſeparated from the body of Chriſt*. Now it is a thing very hard to be conceived, how ſuch a real diviſion, and actual *ſhedding of blood*, ſhould be ſuffered by the *incorruptible and glorious body of Chriſt*; and it is yet more difficult to conceive, how this can be reconciled with the Council of *Trent*, which declares that after the Conſecration (*a*) in the Sacrament of the Euchariſt *ſub ſingulis ſpeciebus totum atque integrum Chriſtum ſumi, all and whole Chriſt is by the Communicants received under each of the ſpecies*, (which could not be done unleſs whole Chriſt was there) and they anathematize him who ſhall ſay the contrary, which I ſuppoſe this Author was not aware of.

(*a*) Seſſ. 21. c. 3.

(*b*) Bariad. ibid.

27. With like nicety and trifling, he further ſays (*b*) the Body and Blood of Chriſt are *conſumed* by the Prieſt on the Altar, under the *ſpecies* of Bread and Wine, becauſe thoſe *ſpecies are conſumed*. Now it is ſtrange enough, to ſpeak of the *glorified body of Chriſt being conſumed*, which is capable of no corruption: and it is yet more ſtrange, that it ſhould be conſumed by conſuming the *ſpecies*, when it is not the ſubject of thoſe ſpecies. Surely it would be more rational to aſſert the *mortality of the ſoul*, and to think it ſufficiently proved, by the death of the body.

(*c*) Coſter Enchir. c. 9. de Sacrificio Miſſæ.

28. To avoid this difficulty, ſome ſteer another courſe, (*c*) *Coſterus* a third *Jeſuit*, in a manner deſerts the cauſe. He firſt gives ſuch a large deſcription of a *Sacrifice*, as may agree to other acts of Divine worſhip. But when he ſpeaks of the nature of this Sacrifice, he declares it to be *repreſentative* of the paſſion and Sacrifice of Chriſt. He ſaith indeed that Chriſt is *here offered*, but then he ſaith, *Chriſt upon the Croſs was truly ſlain, by the real ſhedding his blood*; but here

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here is *tantum illius mortis repræsentatio, sub speciebus panis & vini, only a representation of his death, under the species of Bread and Wine.* Now though *repræsentare* be sometimes observed to signifie *rem præsentem facere*, to make the thing present, as some learned men have observed, the sense of *Costerus* must be, what we generally understand by representing; because he sometimes speaks of the species *representing the dead body of Christ*, which cannot be by making it so; and sometimes he declares, the Sacrifices of the *Law to represent the death of Christ*, but not *so excellently as the Eucharist*. And concerning the effect of this Sacrifice, (*d*) he declares this difference, between that Sacrifice on the *Cross*, and this of the *Mass*, that the former was offered to *satisfie God*, and pay the price for the sins of the world, and all other needful gifts; but the latter is for the *applying* those things, which *Christ merited and procured by his death on the Cross*. And to this purpose again, *Hoc efficitur per Missæ Sacrificium, ut quod perfecit Christus in cruce, id nobis singulis applicetur: illic pretium est solutum pro peccatis omnibus, hic nobis impetratur hujus pretii applicatio. Quod orationibus quoque in Ecclesia præstatur, quibus rogatur Deus, ut efficiamur participes passionis Christi.* This indeed, if it were the true Doctrine of the *Romish* Church in this particular, would be a fairer account of it, than either it self or others give. But in truth, this is so different from the sense of the Council of *Trent* above expressed, that it seems to import, that this Writer thought it hard to clear and defend the *true sense* of that Church, and therefore chose to represent it under a *disguise*; and in this Controversie in most things he comes nearer to the Protestant Doctrine, than the *Romish*. We own such a *representation* of Christs death in this Sacrament, as consists with his *real presence*, in a Spiritual and Sacramental manner. We acknowledge such a Relation between the *Passion* of Christ on the *Cross*, and the *Memorial* of it, in this Sacrament, that the Communion of the *body and blood* of Christ, and the benefits procured by his passion, are *exhibited* in this Sacrament, and are therein

(*d*) ibid. p. 324, & 334.

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therein by the faithful *received*. And we account the *elements* of Bread and Wine, to be offered to God in this Sacrament, as an *oblation* according to the ancient Church; ſince the ſetting apart and conſecrating the elements, is a *ſeparating them to God*, and to his ſervice; but we do not look upon them, to make way for a *proper propitiatory Sacrifice*, in the Euchariſt. But I now paſs from the conſideration of the *Sacrifice* to conſider *the Prieſt* who is to offer it.

Conſ. 3. *The Sacrifice of Chriſt peculiar to his incommunicable Prieſthood.*

29. *Conſ.* 3. It is peculiar to the Office of *Chriſts high Prieſthood*, after the order of *Melchiſedec*, to offer up himſelf to be a propitiatory Sacrifice: and this high Prieſthood is communicated to no other perſon beſides himſelf. The Sacrifice of our Saviour, as (*e*) *Athanaſius* ſaith, hath compleated all, ἅπαξ γενομένη, *being once made*; and he adds, *Aaron had thoſe who ſucceeded him* —— ὅδε κύριος ἀπαραβατον καὶ ἀδιάδοχον ἔχων ἀρχιερωσύνην, *but our Lord having an high Prieſthood, which is not ſucceſſive, nor paſſeth from one to another, is a faithful High Prieſt.* And this was the Apoſtles Doctrine, *Heb.* 7. Now *Bellarmine* ſaith, (*f*) *no Catholicks affirm, other Prieſts to ſucceed to Chriſt, but they are his Vicars or ſuffragans in the Melchiſedecian Prieſthood, or rather his Miniſters.* But here it muſt be conſidered, 1. That if they be *Prieſts of ſuch an order*, as can offer Chriſt himſelf, or the Sacrifice of his Body and Blood, to be a Sacrifice of *atonement* and propitiation, they muſt be capable of performing all the *neceſſary rites* of that Sacrifice. And one great rite thereof is, that as the legal High Prieſt, in making an atonement, was to enter into the *holy of holies*, with the blood thereof, ſo he who offers the great Sacrifice of atonement, which is the Body and Blood of Chriſt, muſt enter into *Heaven it ſelf*, and there *appear in the preſence of God* for us, preſenting his Sacrifice to God in that Holy place, *Heb.* 9. 11, 12, 24. but this none but Chriſt himſelf can do. 2. He who is a Prieſt, after the *order of Melchiſedec*, muſt be a Prieſt *for ever*, ſince the order of the *Melchiſedecian* Prieſthood doth not admit ſucceſſion, as

(*e*) Athan. cont. Arian. Orat. 3.

(*f*) de Miſ. l. 1. c. 24.

as that of the *Aaronical* did, *Heb.* 7. 3, 8, 17, 23, 24, 28. And therefore ſuch perſons as *ſucceed one another* in their Office, cannot be of the *Melchiſedecian* Prieſthood. 3. Since *an High Prieſt* is chiefly appointed, to *offer gifts or Sacrifices for ſins*, Heb. 5. 1. *chap.* 8. 3. and thereby to make *reconciliation*, and execute other acts of his Office, in purſuance of his Sacrifice; the offering that *Sacrifice of reconciliation*, for which he is appointed, is a main part of *his Office*, and therefore not to be performed by him, who hath not the ſame Office. Wherefore ſince no man hath that *Office of High Prieſthood*, which Chriſt himſelf hath, none can make the *ſame reconciliation*, by offering the ſame Sacrifice of atonement or *propitiatory Sacrifice*. Sect. III.

30. But we are told in (*g*) the *Roman* Catechiſm, that there being *one Sacrifice* on the Croſs and in the Maſs, there is alſo *one and the ſame Prieſt Chriſt, the Lord*, and the Miniſters who ſacrifice *non ſuam ſed Chriſti perſonam ſuſcipiunt, they take upon them the perſon of Chriſt, and they ſay not this is Chriſts body, but this is my body*. Now if theſe words ſhould intend more, than that the Miniſter acts by *Chriſts authority* (who hath given to none, authority to be High Prieſts, or Prieſts, of *that order* which himſelf is) and that it is the *perſon of Chriſt* who offers, and not of the Miniſter, then indeed there is a *fit Prieſt* for the Sacrifice. But then it muſt be proved, which can never be, that Chriſt in his *own perſon* undertakes this Office in every Maſs; and then it muſt alſo be granted, that no man in the Church of *Rome* can pretend any more to *offer* this Sacrifice, than he can pretend to be the *perſon of Chriſt*.

(*g*) Catech. ad Paroch. de Euch. Sac. p. 249.

31. Wherefore (*h*) *Bellarmine* gives us their ſenſe, to this purpoſe: *The Sacrifice of the Maſs is offered by Chriſt, by the Church, and by the Miniſter, but in a different manner; Chriſt offers it by a Prieſt, a man, as his proper Miniſter; the Church offer, as the people offer by their Prieſt; ſo Chriſt offers by an inferior, the Church by a ſuperior*; the *Miniſter offers as a true, but miniſterial Prieſt*. Now this pretends an authority from Chriſt, but the Office of performing this Sa-

(*h*) de Miſ. l. 2. c. 4.

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crifice to be in the Prieſt. And to this purpoſe the Council of *Trent*, (*i*) both declares Chriſt to have *commanded his Apoſtles, and their ſucceſſors in the Prieſthood, that they ſhould offer this Sacrifice*; and alſo *beſtow one of their raſh Anathema's on him who ſhall ſay, that Chriſt did not make his Apoſtles Prieſts, or did not ordain, that they ſhould offer his Body and Blood, when he ſaid, Do this in remembrance of me.* But as there is no expreſſion in theſe words of Chriſt, or any other, to ſhew that he inſtituted his Apoſtles and their Succeſſors to be ſuch Prieſts, as to offer a proper *propitiatory Sacrifice*; ſo it appears, that the *ſtate of the Goſpel* doth not admit of any perſon, but only Chriſt himſelf, to offer his own Body and Blood, as a proper and compleat propitiatory Sacrifice; ſince none elſe are or can be of that *Office of Prieſthood*, to which it belongs to offer this Sacrifice, nor is any other capable of performing the neceſſary Rites thereof.

(*i*) Seſſ. 22.

Conſ. 4. *The great effects of Chriſts Sacrifice cannot be attributed to any repeated Sacrifice.*

32. *Conſ.* 4. The great benefits from the *merits of Chriſts Sacrifice*, are wholly procured by that one offering of himſelf, when he *died* and gave himſelf a *Sacrifice of a ſweet ſmelling ſavour*, and now lives for ever to purſue the ends thereof. And therefore there neither can, nor need be any other propitiatory Sacrifice of Chriſts Body and Blood. For that Sacrifice of Chriſt which was offered by himſelf, and made ſatisfaction for ſin, did thereby obtain the *grace*, and gave a compleat and abiding ſanction to the *terms of the Goſpel Covenant*, that through his name, all who believe, and obey, may through his mediation receive *remiſſion of ſins*, and all other *bleſſings of the Covenant*. Now the Euchariſt as a *Sacrament confirms* the benefits of this Covenant, and *exhibits* the bleſſings thereof. But the Euchariſt cannot now, ſince the death of Chriſt, give ſuch a *Sanction* and eſtabliſhment to the new Covenant, that from it that Covenant ſhould receive its ſureneſs and *validity*, as it did from Chriſt's real Sacrifice; nor are any *new terms of grace*, ſuperadded to that. But the *validity of the new Co-*

venant

venant is supposed, in the administration of the Eucharist. And *Christs own offering*, obtained to himself that high *exaltation*, whereby he can give *repentance* and remission of sins, and is a continual Intercessor and *Advocate*, and therefore lives to *execute* his own last Will and Testament, and to bestow the benefits of that propitiatory Sacrifice, which he hath offered. Now these which were the great things procured by his Sacrifice, have such a peculiar respect to his own offering himself, that it is impossible they should have any dependance upon any after-celebration of the Eucharist; especially when this Sacrament must have its vertue from that *new Covenant established*, and from the exaltation of Christ. And since by that Sacrifice, Christ is a *propitiation for the sins of the whole World*, there is need of no renewed *expiatory Sacrifice*, to extend or apply the benefits thereof to particular persons, which is sufficiently done in the Eucharist as a *Sacrament*, and in other *Ministerial administrations*, dispensing in Gods name and by his authority, the blessings of the new Covenant to pious penitent and believing persons. Sect. III.

33. I might here also observe, that (*k*) some of the *Romanists* themselves declare, that *Christ doth not merit in the Sacrament of the Eucharist, because the state of heavenly Glory in which he is, excludes merit*; but here are *presented to God, the infinite merits of his death on the Cross*. Now if this be true, (and the reason given for it is not inconsiderable) it must needs exclude any propitiatory Sacrifice from the Eucharist. But I shall further observe, that those admirable acts of the obedience of Christ, in the wonderful *humiliation* of his life and death, and submitting himself according to his Fathers will, to *suffer even the death of the Cross*, were of high value, for the making his propitiatory Sacrifice, which himself offered, available in the sight of God, to procure his blessing to man. But now since our Lord sits at *Gods right hand*, there is no such further *humiliation* (nor need there be, since what he once did, was of such unspeakable merit and worth) to give any new merits of like nature, to re-

(*k*) Barrad. Conc. Evang. Tom. 4. l. 3. c. 16.

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newed proper propitiatory Sacrifices. But the merits of his life and death are of infinite and ſufficient vertue. And whereas Chriſt neither *appointed* that there ſhould be, nor declared that there is, any proper propitiatory Sacrifice in the *Euchariſt*, he who can think againſt plain evidence, that in the firſt celebration of the Euchariſt, Chriſt offered himſelf a proper propitiatory Sacrifice; and conſequently that he *died* really, the night before he was *crucified*, and was *dead* when his Diſciples heard him *ſpeak*, and converſed with him *alive*; hath a mind and belief, of a fit ſize to receive this and ſeveral other *ſtrange Doctrines* of the Church of *Rome*. But beſides what I have here ſaid, if *Tranſubſtantiation* be a Doctrine contrary to truth, of which I ſhall diſcourſe in the (*l*) next Section, the foundation of the Proper Propitiatory Sacrifice is thereby removed.

(*l*) Sect. 4. n. 14--25.

Of additional Doctrines in the Church of Rome.

34. To theſe Inſtances I may further add, that the *Romiſh Church* ſuperadding to the Chriſtian Religion many *new Doctrines*, as neceſſary *points of Faith*, doth hereby alſo derogate from the authority of our Saviour. For this caſts a diſparagement upon his *revelation*. Chriſt and his Apoſtles made a full declaration of the Chriſtian Doctrine, inſomuch that whoſoever ſhall teach any *other Doctrine*, is under the Apoſtolical *Anathema*, Gal. 1. 8, 9. which (*m*) S. *Auſtin* extends ſo far, as to apply that Anathema to him, whoſoever he be, who ſhall teach any thing concerning *Chriſt or his Church*, or any matter of *faith*, or rule of Chriſtian *life*, which is not contained in the *Scriptures*. But there was nothing taught in the Apoſtolical Doctrine, to aſſert or give any countenance to the *Popes infallibility*, or his Univerſal *Supremacy*; to the propitiatory Sacrifice of the *Maſs*, to the Doctrine of Purgatory, Invocation of Saints, and many other things now delivered as points *de fide* in the Church of *Rome*, of which divers are mentioned in this Chapter. And theſe *new matters of faith*, have ſo altered and changed the *ancient Chriſtian Religion*, that with theſe mixtures, it is very unlike what was declared by Chriſt and his Apoſtles.

(*m*) Cont. lit. Petil. l. 3. c. 6.

35. The

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35. The Council of *Trent* declares their (*n*) receiving the holy Scripture, and their Traditions to be *pari pietatis affectu & reverentia*; with the *like pious affection and reverence.* Indeed it calls these Traditions, such as were *from the mouth of Christ*, or were *dictated by the Holy Ghost*, and *received in the Catholick Church.* But since after their declaring thus much, and expressing the Canon of the Scripture, with the additional Books received in the *Romish* Church, they tell us that this was done, that *all men might know*, what *foundation* they would proceed on, in their *confirming Doctrines and reforming manners*; it is manifest, that all Doctrines of Faith or practice, delivered in that Council, which are not contained in the Scriptures, are reputed to be such *Traditions*, as are of equal authority with the Scriptures. And in the (*o*) Bull of *Pius* the Fourth, many of these Doctrines are particularly expressed, and in the end of it an hearty acceptance is declared, of all things defined in the *Council of Trent*, and it is added that this is the *true Catholick faith, extra quam nemo salvus esse potest, out of which no man can be saved.* And this all who have cure of souls, and preferments in the Church, must own by their solemn *Oath and Vow.* And yet how little that Council in its Decisions, kept to the true Rules of Catholick Tradition, is sufficiently evident from what they at this very time declared, concerning the *Canon of the Scripture*: for their taking into the Canon several of those Books which we account Apocryphal, hath been plainly proved by Bishop *Cosins*, to be contrary to the *Universal Tradition* of the Church.

(*n*) Sess. 4. c. 1. *All these under the name of Traditions made equal with the Scripture,*

(*o*) Form. Juramen. 1564.

36. And if no man may with honesty, add any thing to a mans Deed or Covenant, as if it were contained therein, how great a crime is it to deal thus with Gods Covenant? But the Church of *Rome* not only *equals* her Traditions (containing many new points of Faith) with the Scriptures, and what is the true Christian Doctrine, but it really sets them *above the Holy Scriptures*, though they be in many things contrary thereunto. For they make Tradition

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dition ſuch a Rule for the Scripture, that it muſt ſignifie no more than Tradition will allow. And to this purpoſe their (*p*) Clergy ſwear, to admit the *Scriptures* according to that *ſenſe, which the holy Mother the Church hath held, and doth hold; who is to judge of the true ſenſe of Scripture.* And hereby they mean the Church of *Rome*, there called the Mother of all Churches.

(*y*) In Bull. Pii 4.

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Of the publick allowance or injunction *of ſuch things amongſt the* Papiſts, *as either debaſe the* Majeſty *of God, or give* divine honour *to ſomething elſe beſides God.*

THoſe things deſerve to be condemned as greatly evil, which debaſe the *Majeſty of God*, or deprive him of that peculiar Glory and Worſhip, which is due to him alone; and they who practiſe or uphold ſuch things, ought to be eſteemed as evil doers in an high degree. *Honour*, which, in a ſuitable meaſure, belongs to every Superior, as to a Father or a Prince, in the higheſt meaſure of it, is *proper to God*; and that reverence which is due to him, is neceſſary to be reſerved ſolely for him, both from the rules of *Juſtice and Piety*, and alſo becauſe God is in this reſpect a *Jealous God.*

1. *Images of the Deity are uſed by the Papiſts*

2. But, *Firſt*, It is an abaſing the Majeſty of God, to repreſent the glorious, infinite, and inviſible God, who is a pure Spirit, by a *material Image*. This is frequently and publickly practiſed in the Church of *Rome*, and is there allowed and defended by many of its Writers. (*a*) Cardinal

(*a*) De Eccl. Triumph. c. 8.

dinal *Bellarmine* hath one Chapter on purpoſe to prove, *Non eſſe prohibitas imagines Dei*, that *Images of God are not prohibited*; and he cites *Cajetan*, *Catharinus*, and others, as defending the ſame; and one chief argument, which he uſeth to prove this, is *Ex uſu Eccleſiæ*, *from the uſage of the Church*. And he there declares, *jam receptæ ſunt fere ubique ejuſmodi imagines*, that *now ſuch Images are almoſt every where received*; and that it is *not credible, that the Church would univerſally tolerate any unlawful thing*: Where he alſo declares, that theſe were approved both in the ſecond Council of *Nice*, and in the Council of *Trent*. But the making an Image of the true God, ſtands condemned in the holy *Scriptures*, even in the *Second Commandment*, *Thou ſhalt not make to thy ſelf any Graven Image—— thou ſhalt not bow down to them nor worſhip them*. And that the Divine Law doth not only forbid the Images of a *falſe God*, or an *inferiour Deity*, but ſuch alſo as were intended to repreſent the true God, is manifeſt from Deut. 4. 15, 16. *Take good heed to your ſelves* (*for you ſaw no manner of ſimilitude, in the day the Lord ſpake unto you in Horeb, out of the midſt of the fire*) *leſt ye corrupt your ſelves, and make you a Graven Image, the ſimilitude of any figure, or the likeneſs of Male or Female*. And this Command is the more to be conſidered, becauſe of that *emphatical caution*, which is uſed by way of Preface thereto.

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againſt the Divine Law.

3. It was one of the hainous ſins, which generally prevailed in the *Pagan* World, that they *changed the Glory of the Incorruptible God, into an Image made like to corruptible Man, and to Birds*, &c. *Rom.* 1. 23. And though I charge not the *Roman* Church, with running parallel to the *Pagan* Idolatry; yet this diſparaging the Divine Being, by ſetting up *viſible Images* and Repreſentations thereof, and giving *Worſhip* to them under that relation, was one of the great Miſcarriages of the *Gentiles*, and yet the chief part at leaſt of the *Gentiles*, did not think theſe very Images to be the proper Beings of their Gods. For beſides their acknowledgment of the *Wiſdom*, *Purity*, *Goodneſs*, and *Power* of the

This is agreeable to the Pagan practice.

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the Deity, which many Testimonies produced by *Justin Martyr*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Eusebius*, and other Christian Writers do express, there was also retained amongst them, such Notions concerning the Deity, as to acknowledge God to be *incorporeal*. It is observed by (*b*) *Origen*, that *Numenius*, a *Pythagorean* Philosopher, had enumerated those *Gentile Nations*, who asserted God to be an Incorporeal Being. And that great expression of *Euripides* is very plain, wherein he calls God, *one who sees all things, but himself is invisible* (*c*) τὸν πάνθ' ὁρῶντα, κ' αὐτὸν ὐχ ὁρώμενον. And agreeable to this, is the expression of *Orpheus*, that *no Mortal sees God*, but he *sees all*.

(*b*) Cont. Celi. l. 1. p. 13.

(*c*) Cl. Alex. Adm. ad Gent.

No such thing in the Primitive Church.

4. The Primitive Christians not only had *no Images of God*, as appears from various expressions of *Origen*, *Minutius Felix*, and other Writers of those Ages; but they also *greatly condemned* any such thing. The ancient Council of (*d*) *Elvira* took care, *ne quod colitur & adoratur, in parietibus depingatur, that that* Being which is *worshipped and adored should not be painted upon walls*; which words must needs forbid and condemn the making Images of God. And *Eusebius* speaking of representing the Divine Being by dead matter, saith (*e*), τί βιαιότερον; *what can offer more violence to reason?* And when he spake of the *soul* of man being the Image of God, as being *rational*, *immaterial*, *immortal*, and not subject to hurt and force, and that no Figure or Image could be made of this, he adds, (*f*) τίς μανείη τοσοῦτον; *who can be so mad as to think, that the most high God may be represented by an Image made like to a man?*

(*d*) Conc. Elib. c. 36.

(*e*) Præp. Evang. l. 3. c. 7.

(*f*) ibid. c. 10.

Some Romanists are not willing to own this general practice.

5. But in the Church of *Rome*, the *Blessed Trinity* is frequently pictured, and represented by an Image. And though this be a common and publick practice, yet some of the *Romanists* are so unwilling, either to defend, or to acknowledge it; that they deny their having any Images of the Trinity. To this purpose (*g*) *Costerus* having shewed from the Scripture, that *nothing can resemble God*, adds,

(*g*) Enchir. c. 11. Nulla igitur ratione dicendum est Christianos vel colere vel asservare Sanctæ Trinitatis vel Patris vel Spiritus Sancti imagines.

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It muſt therefore upon no account be ſaid, that Chriſtians do either worſhip or keep the Images of the holy Trinity, or of the Father, or of the Holy Ghoſt. And, ſaith he, when the Father is painted, as the *ancient of days*, this is not the *image of the Father*, but a repreſentation of the *viſion of Daniel*, or of S. *John*; and the *Dove that is painted*, is not the image of the *Holy Ghoſt*; but of *that Dove*, *in which at Jordan the Holy Ghoſt deſcended.* And to the ſame purpoſe ſpeaks an *Engliſh Catechiſm*, ſaid to be Printed at *Doway*. But though theſe Writers are not willing to defend, but would rather conceal, what is allowed by their Church in this matter; the frequent uſe of the Pictures of the *three perſons of the Trinity* all together, and where there is no decyphering of theſe *viſions*, will not admit that account they give thereof.

6. Whereof (*h*) *Bellarmine*, who as I above ſhewed, freely acknowledgeth the *practice*, of making Images of God, doth as plainly aſſert it to be allowable, *Licet pingere imaginem Dei Patris*, &c. *It is lawful to paint the Image of God the Father in the form of an Old Man*; *and of the Holy Ghoſt in the form of a Dove.* And the Council of (*i*) *Trent*, which in its laſt Seſſion coucheth ſeveral things under few words, expreſſeth its allowance of the *picturing God*, when it orders the people to be taught, *that the Divinity is not to that purpoſe repreſented in a figure, as if it could be ſeen by bodily eyes, or could be expreſſed by colours and figures.*

(*h*) De Eccleſ. Triumph. c. 8.

(*i*) Seſſ. 25. *Images of God approved by the Council of* Trent.

7. But ſuch repreſentations are wholly unlike to the infinite and immenſe Divine Nature, in which are the perfections of *wiſdom*, *power*, goodneſs, truth and purity, and other ſuch like. And where theſe *ſpiritual excellencies* are in a conſiderable degree, there is indeed a true partaking of the Divine Image, and a *likeneſs to God.* But the reſembling him by a corporeal Image is the making a *falſe*, and a low and mean repreſentation of God, which abateth that *high reverence*, which is due to his Majeſty. And what finite material thing can be thought like to him, who is ſo infinitely above all things, of whom the Prophet *Eſay*

They are unſuitable to the Divine Nature.

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saith, *Isaiah* 40. 18. *To whom will ye liken God, or what likeness will ye compare unto him?* And if a man would think himself injured, if he be represented in the shape or form of another Being, far inferiour to his nature; how great an offence may it well be to the Glorious God, to be pictured against his express command, in the shape of an *old man?*

(*k*) Catech. ad Paroch. de Decal. pr. Præcepto.

8. The (*k*) *Roman* Catechism observes *two ways*, whereby the Majesty of God is greatly offended by Images; the one, if *Idols and Images be worshipped as God*, and the other, if any shall endeavour to make the form, or *shape of the Divinity, as if it could be seen by bodily eyes*; and proves by the Scripture, that such a figure of God neither *can be made*, nor may be *lawfully* attempted. And it further acknowledgeth, that God to the intent he might *wholly take away Idolatry, imaginem divinitatis ex quavis materia fieri prohibuit; did forbid the Image of the Deity to be made of any matter whatsoever*; and that the wise Lawgiver did enjoin, *ne divinitatis imaginem fingerent*, that *they might not frame an Image of the Deity*, and give the *honour of God* to a Creature. But after all this it requires, that no man should *think there is any offence against Religion, when any person of the most Holy Trinity, is expressed by certain signs or figures, under which they appeared in the Old Testament or in the New:* and it is there said, that this is done to *declare their properties or actions*; as according to the vision of *Daniel*, the representation of the ancient of days, with the Books open, shews the *eternity and wisdom* of God.

and unfit to represent the Attributes of God.

9. But the Divine Attributes and perfections are so *infinite and spiritual*, that they are as uncapable of being represented by an Image as his nature is. And the shape of an *old man* doth directly express nothing of Wisdom or Eternity: and such conceptions as may be suggested, by the sight of such a Picture, are very imperfect and below the Divine excellency; since such a Being as is so represented, is infirm and *decaying*, and become unfit for action, and can *see* but a little way before him, and also is of such a nature,

ture, as is ſtained and *infected with ſin.* And if ſuch *pretended defective reſemblances*, of the properties of God, could be a ſufficient defence, for the making Images of the Deity, the Pagans might then be juſtified in many of their Images, who ſpake more on their behalf than all this comes to. For beſides what perfections the *figures of their Images* might darkly expreſs, it was pleaded by (*l*) *Porphyry* on their behalf, that as to the *matter of their Images*, they framed them of *Cryſtal*, *Marble*, *Gold*, and ſuch like pure Metals, becauſe the Divine Being is not capable of being ſtained, χρυσὸς δὲ ὐ μιαίνεται, *Gold doth not admit of any defilement* or corruption. And that which repreſents the *purity*, excellency and *incorruption* of the Divine Nature (if it were done worthy of God) hath reſpect to none of the leaſt Divine perfections.

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(*l*) in Euſ. pr. Evang. l. 3. c. 7.

10. And concerning the Argument, made uſe of from the *viſions in the Scriptures*, or the appearances, under which God manifeſted his preſence to men, as the Holy Ghoſt deſcended in a *bodily ſhape*, *like a Dove*, Luk. 3. 22. and the *ancient of days*, is intended to ſignifie God, *Dan.* 7. 9. it is to be conſidered, that theſe appearances (the one in viſion, and the other in plain view) with others, were not *repreſentations of the Divine nature*, as if that was like to theſe things, or might be pictured by them; but they were extraordinary teſtimonies, viſibly evidencing a more eminent, and *ſignal preſence of God*, at that time, and place. And of this nature was alſo the *buſh burning* and not conſumed, the pillar of *cloud and fire*, that led the *Iſraelites*; the *darkneſs*, *blackneſs* and tempeſt on Mount *Sinai*; the *Cloud* on the Mercy-ſeat; and that which ſometimes filled the Tabernacle and the Temple, as at the firſt Conſecration of each of them. Such alſo was the appearance of *fiery cloven tongues*, which ſat on the Apoſtles, at the deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt, and the *fire* which oft came down from Heaven, upon the Sacrifices, in teſtimony of Gods acceptance. All theſe were manifeſtations of a more *ſpecial preſence of God*, but none of them were intended to expreſs any ſuch *likeneſs of the Deity*,

The forms under which God appeared in viſion, or otherwiſe, in the Old Teſtament or the New, were not reſemblances of his Being, but teſtimonies of his more ſpecial preſence at that time and place.

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ity, that it ſhould be lawful to picture it in that figure. And thoſe words I above mentioned, *Deut.* 4. 15. *Ye ſaw no manner of ſimilitude in the day the Lord ſpake unto you in Horeb, out of the midſt of the fire*, do ſufficiently ſhew, that though there was an extraordinary, and particular preſence of God, manifeſted *in the fire*, upon Mount *Sinai*; the appearance of that fire, out of which the Lord ſpake, was far from being intended to be any *ſimilitude* of God, or to give us a liberty to make any ſimilitude of him whatſoever. And if any Image of God ſhould be pretended to be of like nature with thoſe appearances now mentioned, ſo as to contain a peculiar teſtimony of the *ſignal preſence of God in them*; this would render them the more manifeſtly *Idolatrous*.

(*m*) de Eccl. Triumph. l. 2. c. 8.

11. But beſides this, (*m*) Cardinal *Bellarmine* urgeth, for the lawfulneſs of reſembling God in the figure of a man, that *Angels are painted though they be incorporeal*; and that the Scripture ſpeaks of his *hands, face, feet*, and attributeth to him *all the parts of a man*, when it ſpeaks of his *ſtanding, ſitting and walking*. To which I Anſwer, 1. The picturing of an *Angel*, if it be only done to ſuggeſt to our minds, ſome general notice of an Angel, or to put us upon framing a conception of that Being, is a thing which may be allowed. But if a *glorious Angel* ſhould be purpoſely preſented to us, as an object for our *great honour*, under ſuch a repreſentation as is uſual in the picturing an Angel, he would be much *miſrepreſented* thereby, to the diſadvantage of the excellencies of his nature. But yet there would not that great injury be done to the Angel thereby, that is done to the *Majeſty of God*, in debaſing him, againſt the duty of a Creature, and alſo againſt his *expreſs Law and Command*.

Of the Picturing of Angels,

and the expreſſions of the face, and eyes of God.

2. That the Scripture ſpeaking of the *face of God*, and his *hands and eyes*, ſince theſe phraſes are to be underſtood in a *figurative ſenſe*, doth give us no more allowance, to take them in a proper *literal ſenſe*, and thereupon to picture God, with ſuch a *corporeal face*, and hands, againſt his particular Command, and in derogation from his Majeſty; than

than it gives countenance to our affirming that *God hath a body*, and ſuch *corporeal parts*, which are contrary to his *Spiritual nature*. And it might be added, that the *picturing* God, in ſuch a bodily ſhape, may have an ill influence, upon the *groſs conceptions* of ſome men, concerning the Deity. And men are not ſo wholly out of danger of theſe miſconceptions, when it was once ſo openly and hotly aſſerted (*n*) by the *Egyptian* Monks, that God had a body, and an *humane ſhape*, and that *Theophilus* then Biſhop of *Alexandria* complyed with this opinion, though that was probably done out of deſign: and even *Epiphanius* is reported by (*o*) *Socrates*, and *Sozomen*, to be more heartily a favourer of that Opinion. And this was alſo propagated by *Audeus*, of whom *Theoderet* gives ſome account, *Hiſt. Eccleſ. l.* 4. *c.* 9.

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(*n*) Socr. Ecc. Hiſt. l. 6. c. 7. Soz. l. 8. c. 11, 12.

(*o*) Socr. ibid. c. 9. Soz. ibid. c. 14.

12. But (*p*) *Bellarmine* further endeavours to evade all that can be ſaid againſt the Images of God, by diſtinguiſhing between 1. An Image to expreſs a *perfect ſimilitude of form*, and this he grants is not to be admitted, concerning God. 2. To repreſent an *Hiſtory*. And 3. without reſpect to Hiſtory, in reſembling the nature of a thing, not by *proper ſimilitude, but analogically*, and by metaphorical ſignifications, and he ſaith, *thus they paint Angels as young men, & hoc modo pingimus Deum patrem, cum eum extra hiſtoriam pingimus, humana forma*; *on this manner we paint God the Father, when out of Hiſtory, we paint him in the ſhape of a man*. But this diſtinction will not be to any great purpoſe, becauſe, 1. Euen the *Pagans* did not think their Images to have a *likeneſs of ſhape* unto their Gods. 2. It ſeems to be no great commendation of any Image, that it is *unlike* the thing it repreſents, and doth *not truly expreſs it*. 3. That all the Images of the *Roman* Church are alſo of this nature, even the *Images of Saints departed*. For the *Roman* Church worſhips only the *Souls* and Spirits of Saints deceaſed, as enjoying this beatifical viſion, not their *bodies*, which till the Reſurrection are dead in their graves. And therefore the *Images of theſe Saints* do not expreſs

(*p*) ubi ſupra. Bellarmin's *diſtinction conſidered*.

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preſs a *likeneſs of ſhape to their ſouls*, but referr to them, by expreſſing the reſemblance of the bodies, in which they once dwelt, and to which they were, and ſhall be again united, though now ſeparated from them. And therefore this notion allows the Images of *God*, in like manner as the Church of *Rome* ſets up Images of *Angels* and *Saints* deceaſed; not making any conſiderable difference betwixt theſe, ſo far as concerns the repreſenting every one of them by their Image; and conſequently muſt allow the *worſhipping* every one of theſe Images, with a proportionable honour in *relation* to the Beings repreſented by them. 4. If this notion were of any weight, the *Jewiſh Church* might then have been warranted, in ſetting up *Images* of God (and *worſhipping* them alſo with reſpect to God) provided they were not like him, nor eſteemed ſo to be. And yet God plainly forbad their making any Image of him, in the likeneſs of *male or female*, or any other thing; though he had ſufficiently taught them, and they well knew, that the Deity was not in *ſhape* like to any of theſe. And God declares his diſlike, againſt any ſuch Images; becauſe they could frame nothing which they could *liken* to him: which being a reaſon of perpetual and abiding truth, doth concern the Chriſtian ſtate as well as the *Jewiſh*; and the laying down this reaſon, doth ſufficiently declare, againſt all ſuch Images as are *not like to him*.

Of the Romaniſts *worſhipping the* Euchariſt *with Divine worſhip.*

13. *Secondly*, I ſhall ſhew that the *Romaniſts* give *proper Divine worſhip* to that which is not God. And here I ſhall particularly inſtance in the Sacrament of the Euchariſt, to which they profeſs to give that *Latria*, *or high worſhip*, which is due to the true God alone. This is the plain Doctrine of the Council of *Trent*, (*q*) *fideles omnes Latriæ cultum qui vero Deo debetur huic Sacramento deferre, that all good Chriſtians do give to this Sacrament that properly Divine worſhip which is due to the true God.* And in the beginning of that Seſſion, they ſtrictly forbid all Chriſtians thenceforward to *believe* otherwiſe, and their ſixth Anathema is againſt

(*q*) Conc. Trid. Seſſ. 13. c. 5.

againſt him, who ſhall *ſay that Chriſt in the Euchariſt is not to be adored with that which is the proper Divine worſhip.* In like manner it is expreſſed in the *Roman Catechiſm*, publiſhed by the authority of *Pius* the Fifth (*r*), *huic Sacramento divinos honores tribuendos eſſe, that Divine honour is to be given to this Sacrament.* And the words of Adoration in the Miſſal, and the acts of adoration unto this Sacrament, are accordingly to be underſtood, to give Divine honour thereunto. And *Azorius* is for giving this Divine worſhip even to the (*ſ*) *ſpecies*, or appearances of Bread and Wine in this Sacrament. But the Council of *Trent* ſeem not to extend it ſo far, and the *Roman Catechiſm* declares, that when they affirm this Sacrament is to be worſhipped, *they underſtand this of the Body and Blood of Chriſt* therein.

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(*r*) Catech. ad par. de Euch. Sacr. in init.

(*ſ*) Inſtit. Mor. part. 2. l. 5. c. 16.

14. We greatly *reverence* the holy Sacrament, as an excellent inſtitution of our Saviour, but reſerve the Divine honour to God alone: for there is nothing which is not truly God (be it otherwiſe never ſo ſacred) to which ſuch worſhip may be given. S. *Paul* was an eminent Apoſtle, but, with deteſtation, diſclaimed the receiving it, *Act.* 14. 13, 14, 15. The *brazen Serpent* under the Law was of Gods inſtitution, for the healing thoſe *Iſraelites*, who looked upon it, but yet it was a great ſin to worſhip it with *Divine honour.* If the homage peculiarly due to a Prince, be given to any other in his Dominions, though it be to one he hath highly advanced, he will account this a diſparaging his dignity, and practiſing Treaſon and Rebellion: and God who is a *jealous God*, will not give his worſhip to another. But this practice of the *Roman* Church depends upon their Doctrine of *Tranſubſtantiation*: for if that ſubſtance which is in the Sacrament, be no longer Bread and Wine, but be changed into the ſubſtance of the very Body and Blood of Chriſt, in union with his Divinity, then and only then, may *Divine honour* be given unto it. And if it be in truth the very ſame *glorified Chriſt*, who is at Gods right hand, and nothing elſe, then is that worſhip which

This is grounded upon tranſubſtantiation.

is

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is due to *Christ the Son of God*, which is proper Divine Worship, as much to be performed to this *Sacrament*, as to him in Heaven, since both is substantially one and the same thing, wholly and intirely. The (*t*) Council of *Trent* declares, that by the consecration of the Bread and Wine, there is *a conversion of their whole substance, into the substance of the Body and Blood of Christ*: And they say, *the Body and Blood of Christ with his soul and Divinity, and therefore whole Christ, are contained in the Eucharist, but the substance of the Bread and Wine remains not, but only the species or appearance thereof, and that this the Church calls Transubstantiation.* On this Doctrine it founds the Divine worship of the Sacrament, and it anathematizeth him, whosoever shall speak against this Transubstantiation, and forbids all Christians, that they shall not dare to *believe* or *teach* otherwise concerning the Eucharist, than as this Council hath determined. Now if this Doctrine of *Transubstantiation be true*, the giving Divine worship to this Sacrament is but just: but if this be *false*, as the (*u*) Church of *England* declares, then is the giving Divine honour thereto certainly and greatly sinful and evil.

(*t*) Sess. 13. c. 1, 4, 5. & Anath. 1. & 2.

(*u*) Article 28.

15. It is acknowledged that this holy Sacrament, administred according to Christs institution, doth truly and *really exhibite* and communicate Christs *Body and Blood*, with the benefits of his Sacrifice, in an Heavenly, Mystical and Sacramental way: but the manner of this gracious presence, it is needless curiously to enquire. And though the elements of *Bread and Wine* remain in their proper substances; yet are they greatly *changed*, by their consecration, from common Bread and Wine, to contain under them, such Spiritual and *Divine Mysteries*; which is the effect of Divine power and grace. Nor is it possible that these elements should tender to us Christ, and the benefits of his Passion, if this work had not been ordered by the power and *authority of God*, in his Institutions, who hath the disposal of this grace. But that the elements of Bread and Wine, remain in their *substance*, and that they are *not transubstan-*

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substantiated into the Body and Blood of Christ, is generally asserted by all *Protestants*, whilst the contrary is universally affirmed by the *Romanists*, and is made one great branch of the true *Catholick Faith*, and the new *Roman Creed*, according to the famous Bull of *Pius* the Fourth, which is so solemnly sworn unto. Indeed there are such expressions frequently used in the Church of *Rome* as these, (*w*) that Christ who is *present in Heaven by his natural presence, is present in other places in substance, by that way which we can more easily believe than express by words*; and the *Roman Catechism* saith, (*x*) *this change must not be curiously enquired into, for it cannot be perceived by us*; and *Baronius* declares, that (*y*) *modo ineffabili transubstantiatur, it is transubstantiated by an unspeakable manner*. But it is manifest from their plain decisions, that these and such like expressions relate either to the manner of the *Divine operation*, or to the way of explicating, how he can be substantially present, in every Sacrament while he is ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at Gods right hand: for the *manner of his presence* it self, they have expressed to be by Transubstantiation, as above explained.

(*w*) Conc. Trid. ubi sup. c. 1.

(*x*) de Euch. Sacr. post med.

(*y*) Baron. An. Eccl. an. 44. n. 49.

16. But that the elements of Bread and Wine, have not their substance changed, into the proper substance of the Body and Blood of Christ may appear, *First*, Because there is nothing in the *Institution* of this Sacrament (from whence the nature of this Sacrament must be discerned) or any where else in the holy *Scripture*, which affords any proof for Transubstantiation. It is observed by (*z*) Bishop *Cosins*, that *Scotus*, *Durandus*, *Biel*, *Occam*, *Cameracensis*, Bishop *Fisher* against *Luther*, and Cardinal *Cajetan*, did all acknowledge, that Transubstantiation could *not be proved* sufficiently from *Scripture*, and their words are by him produced; and that *Bellarmine* declared himself doubtful thereof. Those words of our Saviour so much urged by the *Romanists*, *This is my Body*, do not determine the manner of his presence, or that he is Transubstantially there,

No Transubstantiation is proved from Scripture:

(*z*) Hist. Transubst. c. 5. n. 3.

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there, and so carnally, that according to the (a) *Roman Catechism, his bones and nerves*, and whole Christ is there substantially contained. But this may well be so understood, that he *spiritually and sacramentally*, under visible elements, exhibits the Sacrifice of himself, so as to apply it to true Christians, and interest them in it, and the blessings and benefits thereof. Nor do the use of the like phrases in Scripture, import any *substantial change* of the things themselves. When S. *Paul* speaks of the *Israelites*, 1 Cor. 10. 4. *that they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ*; it cannot be supposed, that the substance of the Rock should be changed into the substance of Christ, who was not yet Incarnate. When S. *John* declareth, *Joh.* 1. 14. *The word was made flesh*, it cannot be thence affirmed, without Heresie and Blasphemy, that his Divine Nature was changed into his Humane Nature. And when our Lord had spoken, *Joh.* 6. of *eating his flesh and drinking his blood*, and added upon his Disciples being offended at those sayings, *v.* 63. *It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you are spirit, and they are life:* he hereby (and also by what he speaks of *believing*, both in the beginning and ending of that Discourse, and towards the middle of it, *v.* 35. 47, 48, 64.) sufficiently directs them to a Spiritual sense of those things which he had spoken. And a like interpretation of those words, *Take, eat, this is my Body*, is somewhat directed by the same expressions; and is also most suitable to the *nature of the Sacrament*: nor can those words mentioned both by S. *Luke* and S. *Paul*, *Luk.* 22. 20. 1 *Cor.* 11. 25. *This Cup is the new Testament*, be otherwise understood, than Sacramentally, and somewhat figuratively, and these also are expressed as part of the institution of the Eucharist.

(a) Cat. ch. ad Par. p. 223.

It was not owned in the Primitive Church.

17. *Secondly*, The Doctrine of Transubstantiation is inconsistent with the sense of the *ancient Church*. This is particularly and purposely manifested in that Book of the

the late Reverend Biſhop of *Durham*, which I referred unto in the foregoing Paragraph; and therefore I ſhall only mention ſome few Teſtimonies, *Tertullian* arguing againſt *Marcion*, who denied the *reality of Chriſt's Body* (as other ancient Hereticks aſſerted him to have had only the appearance of a Body) ſaith, (*b*) *Chriſt took Bread, and diſtributing it to his Diſciples, made it his Body, ſaying this is my Body; that is, the figure of my Body: but there had been no figure, unleſs the Body had been in truth.* Now the manner of his expreſſion concerning the *figure of Chriſts Body*, ſhews him not to have accounted the Body of Chriſt to be ſubſtantially, but repreſentatively in the Sacrament. And his *manner of arguing*, ſhews him not to have underſtood, or owned the *Romiſh* Tranſubſtantiation. For it might be ſaid to one who ſhould thus argue, and hold the *Romiſh* Principles, by one of the Diſciples of *Marcion*, that there is in the figure the *appearance* of ſuch a Body, which after conſecration is not *real, viz. Bread and Wine*; and therefore it is then fit to reſemble what is of like nature. In the Dialogues of *Theodoret*, it was urged in the defence of the Hereſie of *Eutyches*, that as the *Symbols of the Body and Blood of Chriſt*, after the invocation of the Prieſt, are made *other things and changed*; ſo the *Body of Chriſt after its aſſumption*, is *changed into the divine ſubſtance and nature.* But this is anſwered by the Orthodox perſon to the Heretick (*c*), that he is here *taken in the Nets which himſelf made*; for the *ſymbols or myſtical ſigns, do not after their Sanctification depart from their own nature, but remain in their former ſubſtance, form and ſhape.* And *Proſper* ſpeaking of the Euchariſt ſaith, this (*d*) *heavenly bread*, after its manner, is called the *Body of Chriſt*, when it is indeed the *Sacrament of his Body*; and it is called the *Sacrificing his Fleſh*, and the Paſſion, Death and Crucifixion of Chriſt, *non rei veritate ſed ſignificante myſterio*; *not being ſo in the truth* (or ſubſtance) *of the thing, but in the Myſtery* which ſignifieth it. To theſe particular teſtimonies, I ſhall add two things. The one is, that it is atteſted by (*e*) *Heſychius*, to have been

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(*b*) Tertul. cont. Marc. l. 4. c. 40.

(*c*) Theod. Dial. 2.

(*d*) De Conſ. Diſt. 2. c. Hoc eſt.

(*e*) Heſych. J

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been an ancient usage in the Christian Church, that after the Communion was ended, the remaining elements were *burnt in the fire*. But if Transubstantiation had been then believed; that what remained in these elements, was no other substance but the Body and Blood of Christ, which continued to be such, so long as the species of the elements remained; it must needs have been an horrid and prophane thing for Christians to cast their *Saviour into the fire* to be *consumed* there; and no such thing could certainly have entred into their hearts.

18. The other thing I shall add is, that when in the beginning of Christianity, the Pagans falsly aspersed the Christians, with being so inhumanly savage, that in their private Religious Assemblies, they *murdered* an Infant, and sucked and drunk his *blood*: it was among other things answered by (*f*) *Tertullian*, (*g*) *Minucius Felix*, and (*h*) others, that the *Gentiles* might be *ashamed* to charge any such thing on Christians, who were so far from taking *any human blood*, that they *carefully avoided all blood, even of Beasts*. But this defence could not well have been made on this manner, if they had accounted themselves, to have taken the Blood of Christ *substantially* in the Eucharist, and not only such a mystical representation thereof, as is not void of efficacy and reality. And though I think it manifest; that *blood* may lawfully be eaten, and that the Apostolical prohibition thereof, was but a provisional Decree for those times, from the general declaration in the New Testament, that *nothing is unclean in it self*; from the liberty which Christians were allowed to *eat whatsoever was sold in the shambles*, or was *set before them when they were invited to eat with unbelievers, asking no question for conscience sake*; and also because blood was for this reason forbidden to be eaten under the Law, because it *was given upon the altar, to make an atonement for their souls*, Lev. 17. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. Yet it may not be amiss observed, that according to the computation of time fixed by *Rhenanus*, as it is from him mentioned by (*i*) *Pamelius*, it is now about *five hundred*

(*f*) Tert. Apol. c. 9.
(*g*) In Octav. p. 100. Ed. Oxon.
(*h*) Eus. Hist. Eccl. l. 5. c. 1.
(*i*) Pamel in Apolog. Tertul. n. 138.

dred years, since eating blood was generally allowed in the Western Church: and about that time the Doctrine of Transubstantiation had prevailed, which was publickly established under the time of *Innocentius* the Third, above four hundred and fifty years since. And that *general prohibition of blood*, so long continued, though upon mistake or more than necessary cautiousness, might well be accounted not consistent with the Doctrine of *Transubstantiation*, or not fairly reconcileable thereunto. Sect. IV.

29. *Thirdly*, Transubstantiation doth plainly contradict the *evidence of sense*. Now the testimony of our senses is so considerable, that this is that which assured and manifested, the certainty of the *mighty Miracles*, wrought by Christ and his Apostles; yea of the *birth* of Christ, of his *converse* with men in the world, and of his being *crucified*, *risen again*, *and ascended* into Heaven. Upon the evidence of sense, *Thomas* was convincingly perswaded of Christs *resurrection*; and the other Apostles had such an esteem for this testimony, that they could not but Preach the *things which they had seen and heard*, Act. 4. 20. And the certainty of what they taught concerning Christ and Christianity, they founded upon the evidence of their senses, in that it was what they had *seen with their eyes*, and *what they had heard, and their hands had handled of the word of life*, 2 Pet. 1. 16, 17, 18. 1 *Joh.* 1. 1. And therefore the denying the evidence of sense, would undermine Christianity, and withal take away all possibility of *certainty*, concerning the plain matters of *fact* in the world. And there could be no assurance given, that Christ taught *any Doctrine*, nor could what he did teach, be otherwise conveyed to us, than by our eyes and ears, unless men pretend to *Enthusiasm*. And as that pretence is vain, so if it were not, no other men could be taught by such Enthusiasticks, but by the exercise and use of their *senses*, and upon supposition of the certainty thereof. *Transubstantiation is contrary to the testimony of sense.*

30. But

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20. But our *eyes*, our *taste*, our *feeling*, and the inward sense of nourishment received from the consecrated elements, do all of them testifie, that the Bread and Wine remain in their proper substances after their consecration. But here the Church of *Rome* thinks it her interest to (*k*) take care, *that the minds of Christians, should as much as is possible, be drawn off from the judgement of their senses.* And yet they who do lay aside the judgement of their senses, must not believe, that they do truly either *read or see* any such instruction, as this, directed to them. And if the evidence of sense in the Sacrament be denied; there will then be no certainty to the Communicants, whether there be any *Priest* present to consecrate, and consequently whether there be any words of *consecration* spoken, or whether there be any *elements* to receive consecration. And the senses of the Communicants, do give a more joint testimony, to the elements remaining in their *proper substances*, than to these other instances.

(*k*) Catech. ad Parochos. p. 218. Curandum est ut fidelium mentes, quam maxime fieri potest, à sensuum judicio abstrahantur.

and is also opposite to reason.

21. *Fourthly*, Transubstantiation is opposite to the principles of *reason and understanding*, and includes manifold gross absurdities and contradictions. 1. That the whole substance of the Body of Christ should be in many thousand, yea many *millions of places* at the same time, is sufficiently inconsistent with the nature of a body. And as there are consecrated Hosts in many thousand places at once, the Catechism framed according to the Decree of the Council of *Trent*, agreeably to that Council declares, that (*l*) *under every least part either of the Bread or Wine, whole Christ is contained* (even with his bones, sinews and whatsoever belongs to the true state of his body, as I above observed from the same Catechism). 2. And in pursuance of this Doctrine of Transubstantiation, the *Romish* Doctors do assert if a *Mouse*, or any other brutish Animal or Insect, do eat any part of the consecrated Host, they do eat what is truly and *substantially the Body of Christ*. This is acknowledged by (*m*) *Aquinas*; and though the (*n*) Master of the Sentences

(*l*) Ibid. p. 223, 225. In quavis urri. usq; speciei particula totum Christum contineri.

(*m*) Part. 3 q. 80. a. 3.

(*n*) Sent. l. 4. dist. 13. A.

tences would not admit this for truth, but declared himself of the contrary opinion: yet his Authority is here rejected; and by the *Censure* of (*o*) the Divines of *Paris*, this is reckoned among one of his errors. But it is a thing dishonourable to the glorious Body of Christ, to be eaten of Brutes, and to pass into the draught, and to be substantially present there where even the *Romanists*, who assert that presence, do not require Divine Worship to be given to it.

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(*o*) Lib. 4. Art. 9.

3. And it is contradictory to assert, that the substance of Bread and Wine being gone, the *accidents* thereof do remain, without any subject or matter, being, as the *Roman Catechism* saith, (*p*) *accidentia quæ nulli substantiæ inhærent*, and *species sine aliqua re subjecta*. Thus for instance, the *extension* that was in the Bread, is supposed to remain, when the substance of the Bread is gone; and that extension which can be measured and felt, is in its own nature an extension of matter, and of that which hath parts added to one another; and yet here is extension, and consequently *several parts* distant from one another, but still there is nothing extended, nor any matter, nor any thing that hath parts. And the like may be said of other accidents.

(*p*) Catech. p. 219. & 230. Edit. Lovan. 1567.

4. If it could be imagined, that the substance of the Bread and Wine was abolished by consecration (though it is not usual for the *blessing of God* to destroy, but preserve the thing he blesseth) the accidents, or appearances thereof only remaining; and that the substance of Christs Body and Blood should be there substituted, without any corporeal accidents, even this could not be *Transubstantiation*, according to the *Romish* description thereof. For if a corporeal substance should cease to be, its accidents or modifications remaining, this must be by *annihilation*; and if there be a new substance, this must be by a *new production*, not a changing the former substance into a latter; since corporeal substances are not capable of being changed, but by the difference of their modifications or accidents: but the ceasing or abolishing of the *substance* it self, which is the *being*

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ing of a thing, the subject matter which must be supposed in the changing things is wholly removed.

22. And 5. That there must be *new matter* continually prepared, in the Sacramental elements, out of which the true substance of the *Body and Blood* of Christ is to be produced, this also includes manifest contradiction. For then the Body and Blood of Christ, must be supposed to be produced, out of a *different matter*, at a *different time*, and in a *different manner* from that Body, which was born of the *Blessed Virgin*, and in which he assumed our nature; and yet this Body which is so many ways differing, from that substantial Body, which is ascended into Heaven, must be acknowledged to be substantially the same. When I consider such things as these, with which this *Romish* Doctrine is full fraught, I must acknowledge that the belief of Transubstantiation includes so much of *self-denial*, that it is a believing against Reason. But there is one thing wanting which hinders it from being an act of *Christian self-denial*, or of true Religion; and that is that it is not a *believing God* or Christ, who never declared any such Doctrine: but must resolve it self into the believing the declaration of the *Roman Church*, which both *Stapl.* and *Cajetan* cited by the Reverend (q) Bishop *Cosin*, make the necessary ground and support for this Doctrine.

(q) Hist. Transubst. c. 5. n. 3.

What account may be given, that so many knowing men in the Church of Rome *should own such unreasonable and unaccountable Doctrines.*

23. And I have sometimes set my self to consider, how it should come to pass that so many understanding and learned men, as are in the Church of *Rome*, should receive such monstrous Doctrines, as this and some others are; and I have given my self some satisfaction, by observing, 1. That *education*, and Principles once imbibed and professed, have a mighty force upon many mens minds, insomuch that bad notions embraced do almost pervert their very *capacities of understanding*, as appears in the followers of many Sects, and in the Pagan Philosophers, who set themselves against Christianity: and these things especially when linked with *interest*, have such a commanding influ-

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influence upon many men of underſtanding, that they hinder them from attending to the cleareſt evidences, againſt their aſſertions; as was manifeſt from the *Scribes and Phariſees*, in our Saviours time, who generally ſtood up for their Traditions, againſt his Doctrine and Miracles alſo. And they of the Church of *Rome* are politickly careful in the training up and principling the more knowing part of their youth in their Doctrines. 2. That when groſs corruptions formerly prevailed in that Church, through the *blindneſs and ſuperſtition* of ignorant and degenerate ages, the politick governing part think it not expedient now, to acknowledge thoſe things for *errors*, leſt they thereby loſe that reverence, they claim to their Church, when they have once acknowledged it to have *erred* and not to be infallible. And therefore all theſe things muſt be owned as *points of faith*, and ſuch other things added as are requiſite to ſupport them. 3. Many more modeſt and well diſpoſed perſons, acquieſce in the *determination of the Church*, and its pretence to *infallibility*; and by this they ſilence all objections, and ſuffer not any doubtful enquiry, ſince whatſoever the Doctrine be, no evidence can outweigh that which is infallible. And theſe alſo are the leſs inquiſitive, from the *odious repreſentations* which are made of them who depart from the *Romiſh* Doctrine; and from their being prohibited the uſe of ſuch *Books*, which might help to inform them better. 4. Others are deterred from making impartial ſearch into truth, by the *ſeverity* of that Church, againſt them who queſtion its received Doctrines, both in the tortures of the *Inquiſition*, and in the loud thundrings of its *Anathemas*. 5. The ſpecious and pompous names of the *Churches Tradition*, *Antiquity*, *Univerſality* and uninterrupted *ſucceſſion*, have a great influence upon them, who have not diſcovered the great falſhood of theſe pretences. And very many knowing men have not made ſuch things the buſineſs of their ſearch: and others who have made ſearch, are willing to take things, according to the ſenſe and interpretation, the favourers of that Church

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impose upon them, and they are herein influenced by some of the things above mentioned. 6. The just judgment of God may blind them who shut their eyes against the light, that through strong delusions they should believe a lye.

24. *Fifthly*, This *Romish* Doctrine is contrary to the *holy Scriptures*. The Scripture declareth, the Body of Christ to be in the Sacrament, and our Church acknowledgeth that (*r*) *this Body is given, taken, and eaten, in the Sacrament*; but then it tells us that *this is only after an heavenly and spiritual manner*; and this is according to the sense of the Scriptures, as I noted, *n.* 16. But the Scripture is so far from owning Transubstantiation, to be the *manner of Christs presence*, that it plainly declares, the elements to remain after the consecration, and at the distribution of them: S. *Paul* therefore mentions not only *the Bread which we break*, 1 Cor. 10, 16. but speaking also of receiving the Eucharist, thrice in three verses together, he expresseth it by *eating that Bread, and drinking that Cup*, 1 Cor. 11. 26, 27, 28. and this must suppose the element of Bread to be remaining, when the Sacrament was administred to the Communicants. But (*s*) some object that *Bread* here is not to be understood of that which is properly and *substantially Bread*, but of Christ who is called the *bread of life*. But 1. The Apostle having spoken before of *Bread and the Cup*, 1 Cor. 11. 24, 25. where he understood thereby, that which was properly and *substantially Bread and Wine*: and continuing his discourse upon the same subject, concerning the Eucharist, and in the three verses immediately following, using the same expressions of the *Bread and the Cup*, cannot from the order of his discourse, be otherwise properly understood, than to have respect to the same things; though by consecration advanced to a more excellent mystery. 2. When the Apostle declares the *eating this Bread, and drinking this Cup, to shew forth the Lords death till he come*: He both declares this action to be commemorative of Christs

(*r*) Art. of Relig. Art. 28.

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(*s*) Coster. Enchir.

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Chriſts death, by ſomewhat which repreſents the *death* of him who can die no more; and by thoſe words *till he come*, he ſhews the proper ſubſtantial preſence of Chriſts Body, not to be in that Bread. But the (*e*) *Roman Catechiſm* ſays, the Apoſtle after conſecration calls the Euchariſt *Bread*, becauſe it had the *appearance of bread, and a power to nouriſh the body*. Now (to paſs by the ſtrangeneſs of the body being nouriſhed, by that which is no ſubſtance) it may be conſidered, 1. That if the *Romiſh* Doctrine had been true, it cannot be conceived, that the Apoſtle purpoſely diſcourſing of the Euchariſt, and laying down the *Chriſtian Doctrine* concerning it; ſhould ſo often call it what it was not, and not what it was. 2. Eſpecially when this muſt have been a truth greatly *neceſſary* to be known. And 3. Since it ſtill continued in *appearance* Bread, the Apoſtle would not have complied with thoſe errors, which the reaſon and ſenſes of men were apt to lead them to, if theſe had been *truly errors*, but would have been the more forward to have acquainted them with the truth.

(*e*) Catech. ad Par. p. 128.

and is not favoured, by ſome Traditions of the Romiſh *Church.*

25. *Sixthly*, I ſhall add (though I lay no further ſtreſs on this, than as it may ſpeak ſomething *ad homines*) that if we may give credit, to the approved Ritualiſts of the *Romiſh* Church, there are *ancient uſages* in that Church, which bear ſome oppoſition to Tranſubſtantiation. It was a cuſtom received and conſtantly obſerved in the *Roman* Church, that the Euchariſt muſt never be *conſecrated on Good Friday*. (*u*) *Johannes Beleth*, an ancient Ritualiſt, undertaking to give an account of this, ſaith there are four reaſons hereof, his firſt is, *becauſe Chriſt on this day was in reality and truth ſacrificed for us, and when the truth cometh, the figure ought to ceaſe and give place unto it*. And his other three reaſons have all reſpect to this firſt. And (*w*) *Durandus* in his *Rationale*, undertaking to give an account of the ſame cuſtom, makes the ſame thing to be his ſecond reaſon thereof, and uſeth theſe very words alſo, *that the truth coming*,

(*u*) Div. Offic. Explic. c. 97.

(*w*) Rational. l. 6. c. 77. n. 34.

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the figure ought to cease. The intent of which is to declare, that the Eucharist is a *figurative representation* of Christs Passion: and therefore on *Good Friday*, when the Church had their thoughts of Christ, and eye to him, as upon that day *really suffering*, they thought fit to forbear the representation of his Passion in the Eucharist. But this notion of the Eucharist is not consonant to Transubstantiation.

What guilt there may be in worshipping what is not God, though the belief of the true God be retained?

26. Having now discharged *Transubstantiation*, as being neither founded in the Scripture, nor consonant thereto, as being opposite to the Doctrine and usages of the Primitive Church, and as contradictory to sense, and the principles of reason; I shall upon this foundation proceed to add something concerning the *dishonour done to God*, in giving Divine Worship to that which is *not God*; and the great *guilt* thereby derived upon man. Now it is confessed generally, that the giving Divine honour *intentionally* to a Creature, is *Idolatry* and an heinous transgression. But it may be worthy our enquiry to consider how far guilt can be charged upon such persons, who profess the *only true God* to be God, and that there is *none other* but he, and design to give the proper and *peculiar Divine honour* to him alone, (for such we may suppose the case of the *Romanists*, in this Controversie, waving here their exorbitant adoration of Saints, the relative Divine Worship to Images, and somewhat higher yet, to the Cross) but actually through *mistake* and *delusion*, do confer this Divine honour upon that which in truth is not God, in confidence and presumption that it is, what it is not; and that it is an object to which *Divine honour is due*, when in truth it is not so. Now in what I shall discourse of this case in general, the instances I shall first mention of some bad men, are only proposed to give some light to the general resolution of this enquiry, and therefore are by no means mentioned to any such purpose, as if I intended to write or think, any thing dishonourably of the *Holy Sacrament*, which I would not think of but with a pious Christian reverence and *due veneration*.

27. Where-

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27. Wherefore I ſhall here lay down three Aſſertions. *Aſſert.* 1. The *miſplacing Divine Worſhip* upon an undue object, may be a very groſs and heinous ſin of *Idolatry*, though the profeſſion of one only God, and of him who is the *true God* be ſtill retained, with an acknowledgement that none other ought to be worſhipped. This with reſpect to *outward acts of worſhip*, was the caſe of divers lapſed Chriſtians, who being prevailed upon, by the terrors of perſecution, did ſometimes either offer *Sacrifice*, or incenſe to *Pagan Deities*, or otherwiſe communicated in their Worſhip, or did *ſwear* by them, or the Genius of *Cæſar*, or did make profeſſion of ſuch things being *God*, which they were ſufficiently convinced were not God. And the like miſcarriages concerning outward acts of worſhip, may ariſe from an evil compliance with others, or from the great vanity and evil diſpoſitions of mens own minds. And concerning *inward worſhip*, it is eaſie to apprehend, that ſuch acts as proceed from the *heart and affections*, as the higheſt practical eſteem, love, reverence and fear, may be miſplaced upon that, which men in their judgements do not eſteem to be God, whilſt they either do not conſider theſe things, to be acts of worſhip; or elſe are more governed by their *affections*, than their judgments. But concerning ſuch inward acts of worſhip as proceed from the *mind and underſtanding*, ſuch as to acknowledge in ones mind ſuch a *Being to be God*, and that Divine honour is due unto it, and all *Divine excellencies* are inherent in it, theſe cannot be performed to any Being, but to that only which is thought, judged and believed to be God. But notwithſtanding this, even theſe acts may by deluſions be *Idolatrouſly miſplaced*, whilſt there is ſtill continued this general acknowledgement, and profeſſion of one only God, who is the true God.

Aſſert. 1. *There may be an Idolatrous miſplacing Divine worſhip conſiſtent with believing one only and the true God.*

28. *Simon Magus*, as (*x*) *Tertullian* declares, did own himſelf to be *the moſt high God*; and as *Irenæus* relates, (*y*) that it was he, who appeared *as the Son amongſt the* Jews, *and*

(*x*) de Præſcrip. c. 46.

(*y*) Iren. adv. Hæreſ. l. 1. c. 20.

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and descended as the Father in Samaria, *and came as the Holy Spirit in other Nations*: and they who were his followers both in *Samaria*, *Rome*, and other Nations did worship him, ὡς τὸν πρῶτον θεὸν, *as the chief God*, as (*z*) *Justin Martyr* affirms, and (*a*) *Eusebius* from him. Now if it should be supposed, that the *Gnosticks* should own the *true God*, and that there is no other God besides him, and should therefore design to give Divine honour to him alone; but should be perswaded, that he was *incarnate* in *Simon Magus*, and thereupon should worship him with Divine honour, this could not excuse them herein from being *Idolaters*. And whereas *Montanus*, and the propagators of his Heresie, did declare him to be the *Paraclete*, as is oft expressed in *Tertullian*; and is affirmed also by divers Catholick Writers, as (*b*) *Eusebius*, (*c*) *Basil*, and others, or as (*d*) *Gregory* expresseth it, that he was the *Holy Ghost*: if any of his followers, professing Divine Worship to be due only to the True God, and the *three persons of the glorious Trinity*, should upon a presumptive delusion, believe that the *Holy Ghost* was imbodied in *Montanus*, and thereupon yield to him that Divine Worship, which is due to the *Holy Ghost*, this could not excuse them from *Idolatry*.

(*z*) Justin. Apol. 1.
(*a*) Eus. Hist. Eccl. l. 2. c. 13. gr.
(*b*) Hist. Eccl. l. 5. c. 14.
(*c*) Basil ad Amphil. c. 1.
(*d*) de Consec. dist. 4. c. Hi vero.

Assert. 2. *All Idolatry is not equally heinous.*

29. *Assert.* 2. In Idolatry, which is in its nature a great and grievous sin, all the acts and *kinds* thereof, in misplacing proper Divine Worship, are not equally heinous and abominable. There is a great difference from the *temper of the persons*, whence acts proceeding from sudden surprize, from weakness of understanding, or from great fear, are not of so high a guilt, as those which proceed from carelessness of duty, neglect of instruction, or contempt of God, or wilful enmity against the true Religion. There is also difference in the *acts of worship*, which I mentioned *n.* 27. as also from the pliableness of temper to be drawn from them, and the resolved *obstinacy* of persisting in them. And there is a difference also, with respect to the *object*, to which Divine Worship is given: whence the worshipping of *Baal*,

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Baal, or the Gods of other Nations, in oppoſition to the God of *Iſrael*, was more heinous than the Idolatry of *Jeroboams Calves*, becauſe it included a profeſſed departing from the true God: and the worſhipping of *Simon Magus*, was the more abominable, as including a following him, and conſequently rejecting the *fundamental Articles* of the Chriſtian Religion. But the Idolatry of the *Calves* was not of ſo high a nature, nor did it utterly exclude the *ten Tribes* from all relation to the Church of God: though even this would exclude *thoſe perſons*, who deſignedly eſpouſed it, or who perverſely or negligently joined in it, from the bleſſing of God.

Aſſert. 3. *All ſorts thereof are greatly evil.*

30. *Aſſert.* 3. All miſplacing Divine honour upon an undue object (which is Idolatry) is a very great ſin. To ſuppoſe that *ignorance* and miſtake, ſhould be any ſufficient plea or excuſe; is to reflect upon the goodneſs and *wiſdom of God*, as if even under the Chriſtian revelation, he had not ſufficiently directed men, in ſo important a duty, as to know the *object of Divine adoration*, or whom we are to worſhip. And how little any miſunderſtanding, upon the grounds laid down by the *Romaniſts*, is like in this caſe to be available for their excuſe, I ſhall manifeſt by propoſing another caſe, which may well be eſteemed parallel hereunto. As our Saviour ſaid concerning the Euchariſtical Bread, *This is my Body*; ſo there is a greater plenty of expreſſions in the Scriptures, which are as plauſible to confer Divine honour upon pious Chriſtians. They are ſaid to be *partakers of the Divine Nature*, to be *born of God*, to be *renewed after the Image of God*, and that *God dwelleth in them*; and that *Chriſt is formed in them, and is in them*, and that they are *members of his body, of his fleſh, and of his bones*, and with reſpect to them he ſaid to *Saul, why perſecuteſt thou me?* and he will ſay to others, *I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat*, &c. and the *Spirit of God dwells in them*. Now if from ſuch expreſſions as theſe, any ſort of men ſhould give Divine Worſhip to every Saint (in purſuance of that fond notion of ſome *Fanatick* heads, that they

The Romiſh *Adoration of the Hoſt paralel'd.*

are

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are Godded with God, and Christed with Christ) and consequently to those *in Heaven*, as well as to those *on Earth*, and thereby multiply the objects of Divine Adoration, really beyond all the Polytheism of the *Gentiles*, I doubt not, but they of the Church of *Rome* would account this *abominable Idolatry*. Nor would they think it sufficient here to be pretended, that these worshippers own only *one true God*, and give Divine Worship to the Saints, only because they believe them to receive a new Divine Nature in becoming Saints, and to put on Christ, and to be changed into the nature and substance of that one God; and though this may seem as contrary to *sense and reason* as Transubstantiation doth, they therefore *believe* it, because God hath said it, (if their manifestly mistaken sense of Scripture be allowed) and they can confidently rely on his word. And if we compare these two together, the *grace* of the Sacrament is very excellent, but it is that which is to be communicated to the *communion of Saints*, and conferred upon them. But the nature of the *pious Christian*, is so much advanced above that of the *Sacramental elements*, that that must be confessed to be true, which was affirmed by Bishop *Bilson*, (e) that *Christian men are members of Christ, the Bread is not; Christ abideth in them and they in him, in the Bread he doth not; he will raise them at the last day, the Bread he will not; they shall reign with him for ever, the Bread shall not.* But these and such like words we mention not, as having any low thoughts of the *Holy Sacrament*; but as owning the truth of the Sacramental elements, remaining in their created substances, and even these we duly reverence as set apart to an holy use and purpose; but we most highly value the great blessings of the Gospel, and the *spiritual presence of Christ*, which though it be tendred in the Sacramental elements, yet being the *invisible grace* of the Sacrament, is to be distinguished from the *visible sign* thereof. To this we have our eye chiefly in the Sacrament, according to that ancient admonition (f) *Sursum corda, lift up your hearts unto the Lord.* And we glorifie the grace of God, who bestows upon

(e) Differ. of Christ. Subject. & Unchr. Rebel. Part. 4. p. 713.

(f) Cyp. de Orat. Dom.

upon them who truly repent and believe, such unspeakable benefits in the use of those means or signs, which are otherwise mean, than as they are sanctified to an holy and excellent use, by the Institution of God, and the right celebration of his Ordinance.

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SECT. V.

Integrity *too much neglected, and Religion so ordered and modelled, by many Doctrines and Practices in the Church of* Rome, *as to represent a contrivance of deceit,* Interest *and* Policy.

Of the Politick interests driven on in the Roman *Church.*

1. IN this last Section, I shall consider some such things in the Church of *Rome*, which represent Religion as it is by them professed to be a crafty contrivance of *human policy*; or a cunning method, to serve the particular interests of some men in the world. True Religion which hath respect to the chief good and happiness of men, doth indeed bring the greatest *satisfaction* to men in this world; but this is not done by gratifying their *inordinate affections*, but by commanding and subduing them. But this being from God, and having to do with him, is a thing of the greatest simplicity and *sincerity* in the world; and therefore proposeth nothing, but what is true and good, and suitable to God and his Honour. And when things manifestly false or evil, which are fitted to *advance the outward interest* of the proposers, are obtruded under the disguise of Religion, and required as *things sacred*, to be received with the greatest veneration; this gives too much appearance, that under the name of Religion, politick designs, and *fraudulent ends* and purposes of men, are managed. And where

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ſuch things are done, it may tempt many of thoſe who diſcover and underſtand them, to caſt off the *ſerious ſenſe of Religion* it ſelf. Now very many things in the *Romiſh* Church, appear deſigned to impoſe on, and *delude* the people; and by falſe pretences, to advance the honour of the *Pope* eſpecially, and of their *Clergy* alſo, and to gratifie the *avarice* of the *Romiſh* Court, and enervate *piety*.

Divers of their errors carry on ſome intereſts.

2. Their Doctrine of *Attrition and Abſolution*, ſeems contrived, to make looſe men, who have little regard to God, to have a mighty *veneration* for their *Prieſt*, who, notwithſtanding their wicked life, both can and will (if they be taught right) ſecure them in the other world, upon ſuch terms as Chriſt and his Goſpel will not admit. Their *Service* in a tongue not underſtood by the people, is fitted to uphold the reputation of the Clergy, among the Ignorant Vulgar, as doth alſo the prohibiting the *Scriptures* in the vulgar tongue, as is obſerved by (*a*) *Ledeſima*. Their Doctrine of *Tranſubſtantiation*, *propitiatory Sacrifice*, and the conficient Prieſt alone receiving the Euchariſt in *one kind*, tend much to extol the dignity and greatneſs of their Clergy: but the falſeneſs of all theſe I have above diſcovered. Their exempting their Clergy, that as (*b*) *Becanus* ſaith, they are *not ſubject to Secular Princes*, nor can be *puniſhed by them*, nor are bound to *obſerve their Laws out of obedience*, doth jointly tend to the advancement both of the Pope, and the Clergy, but is contrary to the true rules of Chriſtianity, as I have in another Diſcourſe ſhewed. And though amongſt us the *true honour of the Miniſtry*, which our Lord conferred upon it, be by many too much neglected and diſregarded, we make not uſe of falſe methods for its ſupport. Beſides theſe, their *feigned revelations* and *viſions*, concerning matters of truth and Doctrine; their many *counterfeited Relicks*, as objects of veneration; and their falſly *pretended Miracles* for the confirmation of their Doctrine, are manifeſtly deſigned deluſions, to impoſe upon others, that they may be admired by them.

(*a*) de Scr. q. 1. non legendis c. 21.

(*b*) M. Bec. Part. 2. Tr. 3. c. 6. Q. 11.

3. But

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3. But because this Chapter hath been already very large, I shall wave many things which might have been insisted on, and shall only consider a few things, which have a chief respect unto the Pope himself. That the claim of the *Papal Supremacy* is in all the branches thereof groundless, I have somewhat declared in the first Section of this Chapter, and more fully in another Discourse there referred unto. And that this is adapted to exalt the *Papal dignity*, grandure and Soveraignty, and to bring in vast *revenues* for its support, needs not be suggested to any considering men. And the Popes pretence to be S. *Peter*'s *Successor*, seems not to be ordered with plain and honest sincerity, in his first entrance thereupon. For at the time of his *Coronation*, among other Rites one of the last is, that (*c*) the Pope must take his *handful of money* from his *Chamberlain* (in which he must be sure to have neither *silver nor gold*) and scattering it among the people, must use those words of S. *Peter*, *Silver and Gold have I none, but what I have, that give I you.* Now it seems not very fair and upright dealing, that the Pope by being advanced to his See, should pretend himself to be a Successor of S. *Peters poverty*; especially when in order to his expressing thus much, there is care taken before-hand, that he must cautiously avoid, the having all *silver or gold* in his hand. If S. *Peter* himself had been known to have done thus, when he used those words, this would have been looked upon in him, as a *cheat and imposture*; which is one of the first things declared by his pretended Successor, in such a case where he might *uprightly and infallibly* have spoken truth. And a like abuse of holy Scripture is in that other Rite at his Coronation, which goes immediately before this; when the Pope is *sat down*, or almost *lies along*, upon a Marble Seat at the *Lateran* Church at *Rome*, which Seat is called *Stercoraria*, and one of the Cardinals lifts him up (*d*) using those words in *Psal.* 113. 7, 8. *Suscitat de pulvere egenum, & de stercore erigit pauperem, ut sedeat cum principibus, & solium gloriæ teneat.* Where what the *Psalmist* calleth

(*c*) Sacr. Cærem. l. 1. Sect. 2. c. 3. fol. 40.

Some things in the form of the Papal Coronation observed.

(*d*) ibid.

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leth a *dunghill*, the *Roman* Church who would be accounted the faithful Interpreter of Scripture, interpreteth concerning a *ſtately Marble Seat*. But waving ſuch things as theſe, I ſhall enquire into two other things of greater moment and concern; the one of *Infallibility*, the ſecond of delivering Souls from *Purgatory* by *Indulgences*, and applying to them a fit proportion of the Churches Treaſury.

Infallibility calculated for deſign.

4. Concerning *Infallibility*. This is a ſtrange claim, in ſuch a Church, where there are ſo many *palpable errors*, contrary to the Doctrine of the Scriptures, and the ancient Church. But this pretence mightily ſerves their *intereſt*: for if this be once believed and received, all their other errors muſt thereupon be received with great veneration, as being founded upon the *higheſt evidence*; ſince no evidence can be above *infallible certainty*; and there can be no evidence againſt it, but what appears to be ſuch is a *miſtaken fallacy*; and therefore no doubts ought to be admitted: for there cannot be any need of *reforming* the Doctrine of ſuch a Church. By this method alſo, ſo far as men believe this, they are kept in a *peaceable ſubjection*, but in a way of fraud, and neglect of truth. We account all honeſt and prudent ways, to promote peace with truth, to be deſireable. But if *ſtedfaſtneſs in errors*, ſuch as thoſe of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, or of any Hereticks or Schiſmaticks, be more deſirable than to underſtand or embrace the truth, then may the devices of the *Roman* Church be applauded, which have any tendency to promote *peace*. And yet indeed all their other projects would ſignifie little, if it were not for the great ſtrictneſs and *ſeverity of their Government*. This pretence to Infallibility, is in the conſequence of it *blaſphemous*, becauſe as it pretends to be derived from God, it makes him to approve, and *patronize* all their groſs errors, and Heretical Doctrines. And if any other perſons ſhould have the confidence, to require all they ſay to be received upon their authority, as unqueſtionable and *infalli-*

bly

bly true; though it appear never ſo unlikely to the hearers, or be known by them to be *falſe*; ſuch a temper would not be thought tolerable for converſe, but it is only *admired* in thoſe of *Rome*, where there is as little reaſon to admit it as any where elſe, and no proof at all thereof, but very much to be ſaid to confute it. For, Sect. V.

5. *Firſt*, It is hard to believe, that that Church ſhould have been poſſeſſed of Infallibility for above 1600 years, which doth not yet agree *where to fix this Infallibility*. It is great pity that if they have Infallibility, they ſhould not know where it is: And it is ſtrange, it ſhould be accompanied with ſo much uncertainty, that thoſe of the *Romiſh* Communion ſhould ſtill diſagree and be to ſeek who the perſon or perſons is or are, that are *Infallible*, and whether any be ſuch or not. Many of the *Romiſh* Church claim Infallibility, to belong to the Pope. This way goes *Bellarmine*, and many others; who aſſert the judgment of *Councils*, whether General or Provincial, to receive their firmneſs from the Pope's Confirmation, and then (*e*) aſſerts, that *he cannot err in what he delivers to the Church as a matter of Faith*. And yet (*f*) he grants that the *Pope himſelf may be a Heretick*, and *may be known to be ſuch*, and *by falling into Hereſie, may fall from being Head or Member of the Church*, and may be judged and puniſhed by the Church: And this is to give up his Infallibility, ſince he who may fall into Hereſie, and declare it, may *err* in what he declares. And (*g*) *Layman* who aſſerts that the Pope in his own Perſon may fall into *notorious Hereſie*, and yet that in what he propoſeth to the whole Church, he is *by Divine Providence infallible*, ſtill acknowledgeth, that this latter aſſertion is not ſo certain, that the contrary ſhould be *an error in Faith*: Yea he admits it poſſible, and to be owned by grave Authors (ſuch as *Gerſon*, *Turrecremata*, *Sylveſter*, *Corduba*, and Gr. *de Valentia*) that *the Pope may propoſe things againſt the Faith*. And this is to profeſs his Infallibility to be uncertain, and indeed to be none at all.

The aſſerters of Infallibility are not agreed who is the keeper thereof.

Whether the Pope,

(*e*) de Pont. Rom. l. 4. c. 1, 2, 3.

(*f*) de Pont. Rom. l. 2. c. 30.

(*g*) Theol. Mor. l. 2. Tr. 6. c. 7. n. 1, 2.

And

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And some of the Popes have been so *unwary*, as in their Publick Rescripts, to let fall such expressions, which betrayed themselves, to have no *confidence* of their own Infallibility. Pope *Martin* the fifth determined a case proposed, concerning the (*h*) sale of a yearly Revenue to be *no Usury*, because one of the Cardinals had given him an account, *that such parts were allowed to be lawful by the Doctors*: Now it is not like, that if that Pope thought his own judgment to be Infallible, that he would profess himself to proceed in his Declaration, upon the judgment of others. And Pope *Innocent* the third, considering those words of S. *Peter*, *Submit your selves therefore, to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's sake, whether to the King as Supreme*, &c. would have it observed, that the King is not expresly called *Supreme*, (*i*) *sed interpositum, forsitan non sine causa, tanquam, but this word* [as] *is interposed* perhaps *not without cause*: but *forsitan*, and *perhaps*, are not a stile becoming the pretence to Infallibility, since the one acknowledgeth and the other disclaims the *doubtfulness* of the thing declared: But so much modesty was very needful in this Epistle, when both this Observation it self, and many other things in that Epistle were far enough from being *infallibly true*; as the founding the Pope's authority upon *Jer.* 1.10. and on God's creating two great Luminaries and such like things, of which above.

(*h*) Extrav. Com. l. 3. Tit. 5. c. 1.

(*i*) Decretal. l. 1. Tit. 33. c. 6. Solite.

or a General Council,

6. But others of the *Romish* Church, own the infallible judgment in *matters of Faith*, to be only fixed in a *general Council*. That *Adrian* the sixth was of this Opinion, is owned by (*k*) *Bellarmine*, to whom (*l*) *Layman* adds *Gerson*, and others of the *French* Church. Now there is much more to be said for this, than for the former Notion. And though a General Council cannot claim *absolute infallibility of judgment in all cases*, because it is possible, the erring Party may happen in some cases, to be the greater number; as appeared in some of the *Arian Councils*, which so far as concerned the greatness of them, bad fair for the Title of General ones. Yet if a General Council be *regularly*

(*k*) de Pont. Rom. l. 4. c. 2.
(*l*) Laym. ubi sup.

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larly convened, and proceed orderly, with a pious intention to declare truth, and without deſign of *ſerving intereſts* and Parties, there is ſo much *evidence* concerning Matters of Faith, that it may be juſtly concluded, that ſuch a Council will not err in them, but that its Determinations in this caſe, are *infallibly true*. But the admitting the Infallible Deciſion of ſuch a General Council in points of Faith, is ſo far from the intereſt of the *Church of Rome*, that the eager promoters of the *Popiſh* intereſt, will by no means cloſe with this. For a General Council having reſpect to the whole *Catholick Church*, and not being confined to the particular *Roman* limits: The Church of *Rome* can upon this principle, plead no more for any *Infallibility* reſident in it, than the Church of *Conſtantinople* or the Church of *England* may do. To this purpoſe the *General* of the Jeſuits, *Lainezius* (*m*) at the Council of *Trent*, declared againſt the Infallible judgment of *Councils*, and thought he had proved that ſufficiently, by obſerving that *all the particular Biſhops there aſſembled were fallible*; and that therefore the firmneſs of its *Conſtitutions and Anathemas*, muſt depend on the Popes Confirmation. And yet it might be thought that the *Providence of God*, may as well order the *deciſions of General Councils* to be infallibly true in points of Faith for the guidance of his Church; as that it ſhould infallibly guide the *Biſhop of Rome*, whenever he teacheth Doctrines of Faith, who in other caſes, and in his *own perſon*, is acknowledged by his chief Advocates to be fallible, even concerning *Matters of Faith*.

(*m*) Hiſt. Conc. Trid. l. 7. p. 427.

7. But there are others, who call themſelves Members of that Church, but are in no great favour and eſteem at *Rome*, who lay no ſtreſs upon the unerring judgments of either *Pope*, *or Council*, more than of other men; but place a kind of Infallibility upon the certainty of *Oral Tradition*, and thence conclude, that whatſoever is delivered down in a Church by way of *Tradition*, muſt be infallibly true; becauſe no Age could make any *change* therein: This is Mr. *White*'s way, and particularly aſſerted in (*n*) the Diſcourſes

or Oral Tradition.

(*n*) J. S. his ſure footing.

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courſes of Mr. *Serjeant*. But what is ſaid in defence of this way, is *pure Sophiſtry*. And if ſuch perſons, furniſhed with theſe Notions or Fancies, had lived in the beginning of Chriſtianity, they might have been Advocates either for *Paganiſm*, or the *Traditions of the Scribes and Phariſees*, on whoſe behalf the *indefectiveneſs* of *Tradition*, might have been urged, as well as for the Church of *Rome*, and almoſt in a perfect Parallel.

Infallibility is not owned by the chief of the Romaniſts, who neither own the Pope's judgment nor the Councils, in deciding controverſies.

8. *Secondly*, There is good reaſon to think, that the *chief men* of the Church of *Rome*, give little credit themſelves to the pretence of Infallibility. For in ſuch *great Controverſies*, wherein conſiderable numbers of that Church are ingaged on both ſides; theſe have ſome of them for many Ages continued without any *ſatisfactory deciſion*, from their Infallibility; even in ſuch caſes, where ſuch a deciſion would contribute much to *truth*, would end *quarrels*, and be greatly uſeful for the guiding all mens *Conſciences*. And therefore the determining ſuch things, would be an excellent work of *charity*, but the leaving them undetermined, or at leaſt the allowing the liberty of rejecting any pretended or real determination, may be *politick*, leſt they ſhould diſoblige the contrary party. I ſhall inſtance in that Queſtion, which is at ſome times *of concernment, to all Mens Conſciences of* their Communion, whether the *authority* of the *Pope*, or a *General Council*, be the greater? Which hath never yet been decided, by the conſent of a Pope, and a General Council. Indeed in ſome *ſmaller Councils* (o) *Leo* the tenth did at the *Lateran* aſſert the *Authority of the Pope* above a Council: And *Pius* the ſecond, in a Provincial Council at *Mantua*, declared (p) *appeals* from a Pope, to a future Council to be void and *Schiſmatical*: which was alſo confirmed (q) by *Julius* the ſecond. But this way of deciſion, is ſo little ſatisfactory among themſelves, that the Cardinal of *Lorrain* did in the Council of *Trent* openly declare, (r) that the *Council was above the Pope*, and that this was the general ſenſe of the *French Church*. And di-

(o) 70 Decret. l. 3. Tit. 7. c. 1.

(p) Ibid. l. 2. Tit. 9. c. 1.

(q) Ibid. c. 2.

(r) Hiſt. Conc. Trid. l. 8. p. 580.

vers

vers other Biſhops ſpake their judgments there, to the ſame purpoſe. Sect. V.

9. And the General Councils of *Baſil* and *Conſtance* aſſerted the authority of the *Council above the Pope*; and yet this is no ſatisfactory deciſion, to them of the contrary opinion. So that here we have the *pretence to Infallibility*, whether in the Pope, or in a General Council, ſlighted by themſelves as they think fit. And this is a thing of ſuch concern, that if the *higheſt authority* be in the Council, this muſt fix the *Infallibility* there alſo (if there be any ſuch thing) becauſe *infallible determination* muſt be by a Divine guidance, and ſo muſt include *God's Authority* in that Determination, to which none can be Superior. If this be ſeated in the Council, it would take down the Pope's Plumes: If in the *Pope*, the World might be ſpared the trouble of General Councils, as a needleſs thing, and then all thoſe Chriſtian Churches, Emperors and Biſhops (which will take in divers Biſhops of *Rome*) were very imprudent, who either laboured much for them, or took any great ſatisfaction in them. Wherefore it muſt needs be a buſineſs of *deſign*, and not of *integrity*, to make a loud noiſe about Infallibility, to prevail thereby upon the Conſciences of other men, when they have ſo *low an eſteem* of it themſelves.

Romiſh Infallibility unknown to Primitive Chriſtianity.

10. *Thirdly*, No Infallibility of the *Roman Church*, was ever known or owned in the *Primitive Church*; and therefore was never delivered by Chriſt or his Apoſtles; but the pretence thereof is an *Innovation* of later date. And whereas the Pope unjuſtly pretends to a ſingular right of Succeſſion, to the Authority and *Prerogatives of S.* Peter; it is obſervable, that S. *Peter* himſelf, though an eminent and prime Apoſtle, even in a Council, had no peculiar gift of Infallibility or *judgment of deciſion* above other Apoſtles. For in the Council of *Jeruſalem*, Acts 15. when *after much diſputation*, S. *Peter* had declared his ſenſe, *v.* 7, 11. and after him S. *James* expreſſed his judgment, *v.* 13, 21. the *final determination* of that Council, did much more

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follow the words of S. *James*, than of S. *Peter*, *v.* 19, 20. with 28, 29. Wherefore the claim of (*f*) *Pius* the fourth, in his Epistle to the Emperor, must have an higher Plea, than that of *Succession* to *S. Peter*, that if the *Bishop of* Rome *be present in a Council, he doth not only alone propose, but he also alone decrees, and the Council adds nothing but Approbation.*

(*f*) Hist. Conc Trid. l. 7. p. 552.

11. Nor can it be imagined, that if the Primitive Church had owned any Infallibility in the Pope, or *Romish* Church, that so Pious and good a Bishop as *Cyprian* would so earnestly have opposed the *declaration* of *Stephen*, Bishop of *Rome*, concerning the *Baptism of Hereticks*. But he not only declares *Stephen* to (*t*) be *in an error*, but declares him to have written *proudly*, *impertinently*, *ignorantly and imprudently*; which sufficiently shews him to have known nothing of his Infallibility. And (*u*) *Firmilianus* a renowned Bishop of *Cappadocia*, declares his sense against the *Epistle and Judgment* of *Stephen* also, approving S. *Cyprian*'s answer to it, and using severe expressions against the behaviour and determination of *Stephen*, as *bold*, *insolent*, and *evil*, *improbè gesta*. And (*w*) a *Carthaginian* Council of eighty seven Bishops, did unanimously declare their judgment, for the *baptizing Hereticks* who returned to the Church; which was contrary to what the Bishop of *Rome* had determined. And that this Council did sit, after *Cyprian* had received the Epistle, and *Judgment* of *Stephen* Bishop of *Rome*, is observed by (*x*) *Pamelius*. Now though all these Bishops were in an *error*, in accounting the *Baptism of all Hereticks* to be null, and that they ought generally to be Baptized, when they returned to the Church; yet it cannot be supposed, that they were so *obstinately resolved* in their error, as to reject the infallible evidence of truth: When many of these very Bishops, who lived to understand their error did, as (*y*) S. *Hierome* testifies, *disclaim* and reject it; and that *Cyprian* himself did so (as did also those parts of the Eastern Church who adhered to *Firmilian*) is judged not improbable by S. (*z*) *Austin*, though it

(*t*) Cyp. Ep. 74.

(*u*) Inter Ep. Cyp. Ep. 75.

(*w*) Sent. Episcop. Conc. Carth. in Cypr.

(*x*) Argum. Ep. Cyp. 73.

(*y*) Dial adv. Lucifer.

(*z*) Aug. Ep. 48.

was

was not certain. But hence it appears, that since *Stephen*'s *determination* was slighted, and opposed by such eminent Bishops, both of the *Carthaginian and Eastern Church*, who sincerely designed to embrace the truth, no such thing was then owned as the Infallibility of the *Romish Bishop*. And if *Stephen* did so *generally declare*, against the Baptizing any who returned from any Heresie whatsoever, as he seems to do in the words of his Epistle, cited by (*a*) S. *Cyprian*, *si quis à quacunque Hæresi venerit ad nos*, &c. he erred on the one hand, as they did on the other; and the determination of the general (*b*) Council of *Nice* and of (*c*) *Constantinople* takes the middle way, requiring some sort of Hereticks, who kept the *substantial form* of Baptism, to be received upon their former Baptism; and that others should be baptized, when they returned to the Church.

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(*a*) Ep. 74.

(*b*) Conc. Nic. c. 19.

(*c*) Conc. Const. c. 7.

12. And the *Practical judgment* of the ancient Church, is concerning this case sufficiently manifest in that when *Heresies* arose, and their errors and impieties appeared necessary to be condemned, and the *Catholick* Doctrine was necessary to be declared and confirmed by the greatest and fullest judgment which could be made in the Church; this was not done by application to the *particular Church of* Rome *only*, but by the summoning *General Councils*; which, with all the troublesome Journeys and expences attending them, had been a very needless and vain thing, if the *Romish* Infallibility had then been owned. And in the four first General Councils, the *Bishop of Rome* was *personally* present in none of them, nor was his particular Sanction thought necessary to confirm them: but they were all held in the Eastern parts of the Church, and all of them desired, and obtained the Imperial Confirmation with respect to their external force and effect. And the (*d*) fifth General Council was managed, perfectly contrary to the mind and sense of *Vigilius* then Bishop of *Rome*.

(*d*) v Crackenthorp's Vigilius Dormitans.

13. *Fourthly*, Since so many Doctrines and Practices are asserted in the Church of *Rome*, which are plainly contra-

None infallible who oppose the Doctrine of Christ, and contradict themselves.

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ry to the *Doctrine of Chriſt*, and his Apoſtles (of which ſeveral inſtances are given in this Chapter) that Church ought not, nor cannot be owned *infallible*, by thoſe who own the Holy Scriptures and *Chriſt and his Apoſtles* to be ſo. Beſides this, I might add that the *Romiſh* Biſhops themſelves have oft ſome of them at one time *contradicted*, what others of them at other times have affirmed. The Conſtitution of *Boniface* the Eighth, was revoked by (*e*) *Clemens* the Fifth, as ſcandalous and dangerous. And I above obſerved that *regal Supremacy in temporals*, is owned by *Innocentius* the Third, but is diſowned in the ſtile of many Bulls of Depoſition by other Popes. But there needs no other teſtimony againſt any *pretended Infallibility*, than its being contradicted in what it delivers, by that evidence which is *certainly infallible*. And there can ſcarce be a greater impoſture and deluſion, than ſuch a falſe pretence as this; which is deſigned both as a prop to uphold the whole bulk and *fabrick of Popery*, and a contrivance, to raiſe a very high *veneration* thereof.

(*e*) Clement. in l 3. Tit. 17. c. 1.

Of Indulgences, and the pretence of freeing ſouls from Purgatory thereby.

14. *Secondly*, I ſhall conſider the pretended power, of *ſecuring* offenders from *Purgatory*, or *releaſing* their ſouls out of it, partly by the *Prieſts Maſſes*, and chiefly by the *Popes Indulgences*, and being intereſted thereby in that *treaſure* of the Church, which he hath power to diſpenſe. For the *Romaniſts* tell us, that as there is in ſin a *fault*, and in mortal ſins an obligation to eternal puniſhment, which is diſcharged in the Sacrament of *Penance and Abſolution*; ſo there is an obligation to *temporal puniſhment* even in venial ſins, and if this be not ſufficiently undergone in this life, by way of ſatisfaction, it muſt be made up by the *ſufferings of Purgatory*. And thus a model is contrived and drawn up, to ſhew how ſinners may eſcape theſe evils of ſin, without amendment. Now ſin indeed is of that pernicious and hurtful nature in every reſpect, that by reaſon of it, God ſometimes *puniſheth perſons* and Families, even after true repentance, and receiving the

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the perſon into his particular favour; and ſuch were the judgements on *Davids Houſe*, after his Murther and Adultery. And I eſteem the practices of ſin and vice, to be ſo hurtful, that though they be ſincerely repented of, if that repentance and the fruits of it be not very *exemplary*, they will make abatements in the high degrees of the *future reward*. And ſtrict *penitential exerciſes* ought to be undertaken by all Penitents for greater offences, according to the quality of their tranſgreſſions. This in the ordinary diſcipline of the ancient Church, was performed before the Church gave *Abſolution*, which oft included the ſevere exerciſes of divers years; and this was the *Exomologeſis* oft mentioned in *Tertullian* and *Cyprian*. And if in *danger of death*, ſuch penitents were reconciled, who had not compleated their penitential exerciſes, (*f*) the Canons required that if they recovered, theſe muſt afterwards be *performed*. And theſe things were teſtimonies of their abhorrence of the ſin, their high value for the favour of God, and the priviledges and Communion of the Church, and that they had exerciſed themſelves to undergo difficulties and ſeverities, rather than to forfeit them.

(*f*) Conc. Nic. c. 13. 4. Conc. Carth. c. 76.

15. But concerning the *Romiſh Purgatory*; though God never revealed any ſuch thing, nor did the ancient Church believe it, I ſhall not here engage in that diſpute; but ſhall only obſerve, that this fiction of temperal puniſhment of ſin in Purgatory is ſomewhat *unequal*, ſince the *body* which is ſo great a partaker in, and promoter of the ſin, is wholly freed from all theſe puniſhments, and reſts quietly in its grave, whilſt the *ſoul* is left alone to undergo all thoſe pains. And if the pretence of *freeing offenders* from great ſufferings in Purgatory be a fictitious thing; it ſerves the ill deſigns of undermining *holineſs and true Chriſtianity*, and tends to raiſe a great *admiration* of the Popes power in them that believe it, and to engage thoſe to the *Romiſh* Church, who can pleaſe and ſatisfie themſelves with the thoughts of ſuch Indulgences.

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16. Now for the right underſtanding this, I ſhall take notice of ſo much as is needful to be conſidered, out of their own approved Authors. *Layman* ſaith, (*g*) this *indulgence is a remitting temporal puniſhment, which is due to God, out of the Sacrament, by the application of the ſatisfaction of Chriſt and the Saints:* and is (*h*) a *free forgiving the puniſhment to be undergone in Purgatory, for ſins committed; or a commutation thereof into ſome light thing, by the mercy of God.* And (*i*) that a *plenary Indulgence doth diſmiſs all the pains, for ſins which are to be puniſhed in Purgatory.* And *M. Becanus* ſaith, (*k*) *Defunctis indulgentiæ conceduntur*, &c. *Indulgences are granted to thoſe who have departed this life, in that the Pope applies to them ſo much of the Churches treaſury, as is ſufficient to compenſate the puniſhment, they ſhould undergo in Purgatory.* And this Treaſury conſiſts of the *Sufferings of Chriſt* which are infinite, and the ſufferings of the *Bleſſed Virgin, Apoſtles* and Saints, which was more than was needful for their own ſins. And *Bellarmine* having laid this as a foundation, on which Indulgences depend, (*l*) that there is a *treaſure in the Church*; and (*m*) that the *Church can apply this treaſure*, further declares, that ſuch Indulgences do ſet men free, (*n*) *à reatu pœnæ, non ſolum coram Eccleſia, ſed coram Deo*; *from the guilt of puniſhment, not only before the Church, but alſo before God:* and that the *plenary* and moſt full Indulgences do extend (*o*) *ad remiſſionem totius pœnitentiæ quæ à Deo exigi poſſit, to the remitting all that penance which can be required by God.* Nor do theſe Indulgences avail only according to their Doctrine to remit Penances, which are *injoined* in Confeſſion or otherwiſe, but (*p*) *ad omnes pœnas etiam non injunctas ſe extendunt*, they reach to all Penances or puniſhments, even to ſuch as are not enjoined: and that an Indulgence (*q*) for *one year, or for ſeven years*, is a remitting ſo much puniſhment, as would be taken off by the *Penitential exerciſes of one year, or of ſeven years.*

(*g*) Theol. Mor. l. 5. Tr. 7. c. 1. n. 1.

(*h*) ibid. n. 4.

(*i*) ibid. c. 3. n. 1.

(*k*) Sum. Th. Part. 3. Tr. 2. c. 28. q. 2.

(*l*) de Indulg. l. 1. c. 2.

(*m*) ibid. c. 3.

(*n*) ibid. c. 7.

(*o*) ibid. c. 9.

(*p*) Laym. ubi ſupr. c. 3. n. 2.

(*q*) ibid. n. 1. Bell. ubi ſup. c. 9.

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These undermine true piety of life.

17. Now *First*, I shall observe, how this by rendring a *holy life unnecessary*, tends to oppose the great design of the Gospel, and to render it ineffectual. For the *precepts* of the Gospel are the indispensable Laws of Christs Kingdom, which he will have observed, or else will say to such workers of iniquity as will not obey his Gospel, *depart from me, I never knew you.* And the *judgment* to come, the *punishments* of another world, and the manifold *promises* of the Gospel, are all laid down as powerful Motives in the Religion of our Saviour, that men may be holy here, that so they may be happy hereafter. But how is all this enervated and made void, if *Attrition with Absolution* will (*r*) free sinners from the stain and fault of their sin, and from eternal punishment: and when no further danger or evil can remain but some temporal pains, these may be discharged (either by the exercises of some *injoined penances*, or without them) by the kindness and favour of an *Indulgence?* and all this may be done without any real exercises of *mortification* or an *holy life.* Indeed the *Romish* Writers require, that the person who receives the benefit of an Indulgence, should be in a *state of grace*: but then they also assert that Absolution with the Sacrament of Penance, is sufficiect for this. And some of the forms of Indulgences express this condition, *si cordis & oris egerint pœnitentiam*; if they shall *practice repentance in heart and word*: but then their Doctors acknowledge this done by Attrition in the Sacrament of Penance, and Confession.

(*r*) v. Sect. 2. n. 1. &c.

18. There is indeed some act of *Obedience* required to be performed by the person, who will interest himself in the benefit of these discharges from punishment, but they usually are of little or no concern at all, with respect to true inward and serious piety. Sometimes indeed the saying over some particular *prayer* is enjoined; but even the bare visiting some places is also sufficient to obtain *plenary Indulgence*; of which nature I shall mention two instances. The one is that mentioned by (*s*) *Bellarmine*, that whosoever shall stand before the *doors of* S. *Peters Church* at *Rome*, when

(*s*) Bell. de Indulg. l. 1. c. 12.

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when the Pope pronounceth his ſolemn bleſſing at *Eaſter*, doth receive a *plenary Indulgence*: but this as the Cardinal there tells us, is no light thing, being uſeful to profeſs the Faith, concerning the Head of the Church, *& ad honorem ſedis Apoſtolicæ, qui eſt finis illius Indulgentiæ*; and to promote the *honour of the Apoſtolical See, which is the end of that Indulgence.* Which laſt words are ſomewhat unwarily plain. The other Inſtance I ſhall mention is, the viſiting the Church of the *Lady* at *Laureto*, to which after ſome Indulgences had been granted, by *Benedict* XII. *Martin* V. and *Nicholas* V. and ſome other Popes, (*t*) *Clemens* VIII. ſo far enlarged theſe Indulgences, that he bountifully granted the *pardon of all their ſins, to all perſons who at any time of the year ſhall orderly go to viſit the Cell of the Virgin at* Laureto. Now if any man can truly think, that ſuch acts as theſe, can ſo reconcile God to man, as to take off all his diſpleaſure to offenders, he muſt be a man ſo far of *no Religion*, as to have no ſerious ſenſe of the *nature of God*: and this is that ſtate to which ſuch methods tend to bring men.

(*t*) Horat. Turſellin. Lauretan. Hiſt. l. 5 c. 20.

Indulgences are a contrivance of gain,

19. *Secondly*, It may be obſerved, that this contrivance includes in it a *deſign of Covetouſneſs*, and loving the wages of Unrighteouſneſs, and cannot be excuſed from being *Simoniacal*: and the feigned imparting to others an intereſt, in the pretended *treaſury of ſatisfactions* in the Church, is really made uſe of as a colour, whereby they increaſe their own *treaſuries of wealth*. Indeed (*u*) the *ſelling Indulgences*, or any Spiritual thing, is declared againſt, but the *inriching themſelves* by them is not; and how far the methods they uſe can be called *ſelling*, I ſhall not be curious to diſpute. Their Authors grant, that a Prieſt is bound (*w*) *ratione ſtipendii, upon account of his ſtipend, ſpecially to offer and apply the Sacrifice to him that gave the ſtipend, applying to him alſo illam portionem ſatisfactionis, that portion of ſatisfaction, which that Prieſt hath a power to diſtribute.* And in their Indulgences, there hath been oft expreſſed the *Condition*

(*u*) 7o Decret. l. 3. Tit. 14. c. 1.

(*w*) M. Bec. Sum. Th. P. 3. Tr. 2. c. 25. p. 2. qu. 10, & 12.

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dition of raising moneys, if that were to be imployed in the regaining the *Holy Land*, or the subduing *Hereticks*, or enemies of the *Roman* Church. To which purpose in the Bull of *Innocentius* the Third, to promote an expedition into the Holy Land, to those who should give *moneys* according to their ability, (*x*) he grants *full pardon* of all their sins, and to them who would also go in person, over and above, *in retributione justorum, æternæ salutis pollicemur augmentum*, he *promiseth* an *increase of eternal happiness*, *in the reward of the just*. And these are very great and liberal proposals, especially being assured upon such terms, as may be performed by men destitute of true and serious piety. But that which is most to be considered, is what is ordinarily practised, and generally known to be intended, and designed, in the grants of these Indulgences, especially when they are annexed to certain places as to the *Lateran*, and *Laureto*, and many others. For those persons are not accounted to come regularly, and in such a manner as is proper for such as expect to receive such great benefits, unless they bring along with them such *oblations* as are suitable to their state. Of this nature *Horatius Tursellinus* throughout his five Books of the History of the *Cell.* and Church of *Laureto*, takes notice of divers instances, of *Princes*, *Cardinals*, *Noble men*, *and Women*, Cities, and divers persons of great fame, who when they came in peregrination thither, some of them offered *golden Crosses and Crowns*, rich Rings and Shrines bedecked with *costly Jewel*, and other things of great worth and value, of which by reason of the high worth and value of them, he gives at least two hundred particular instances: when others also offered according to their ability, coming thither in a daily concourse. The like kind of devotions are upon the same account paid at *Rome* upon the like occasion, especially every twenty fifth year, being the year of Jubilee: and in other places also, though not in so high a degree.

(*x*) Urspergens. Chr. p. 329.

20. Besides the gainfulness of this contrivance, which was unknown to the Primitive Ages, it is hugely adapted to

and a method to raise an high admiration of the Papal power.

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to *advance* the high eſteem of the *Papal power* in all them who promiſe themſelves any advantage thereby. For if our *Saviour* was juſtly and greatly admired for *healing diſeaſes*, and caſting Devils out of the Bodies they poſſeſſed, and the Angel's opening the *Priſon doors*, and bringing forth S. *Peter* was deſervedly eſteemed a work of wonder; how *admirable* muſt the power of the *Pope* be accounted, who by a word ſpeaking, can ſecure thouſands from, or bring them out of the *pains and Priſon* of Purgatory; and hath its effect upon the *ſouls* of men, and at ſuch an unknown a diſtance. Indeed ſome of their Authors ſpeak doubtfully of the Popes power in Purgatory, telling us that (*y*) *he can give Indulgences to them certainly*, to wit, by *offering to God ſatisfactions for them, per modum ſuffragii*, with prayers that he will deliver their ſouls: but that this hath *no certain and infallible effect*, and *God is not bound to do* what he requires, ſince this caſe is not within *the Papal Juriſdiction*; for, *quicquid ſolveris ſuper terram, whatſoever thou ſhalt looſe on earth*, gives limits to the Juriſdiction of the Pope. But others ſpeak confidently of the effect, and (*z*) *Bellarmine*'s doubt whether Indulgences are profitable to the dead, *ex juſtitia & condigno, out of juſtice and deſert*, or *whether it be ex benignitate Dei ſolum & ex congruo, out of Divine benignity only, and from congruity*. Both theſe ways, neither of which the Cardinal dare reject, do render the Popes Authority admirable: and if the latter way could be proved true, ſo far as it imports what the Pope doth herein, to be highly favoured of God (which it cannot be ſo long as the Goſpel-Covenant is in force) I ſhould account this more available, than the pretence of deſert and proper worth. But notwithſtanding theſe differences in their notions; they who doubt of the certain effect of *Indulgences to deceaſed perſons*, to deliver them out of Purgatory, acknowledge their *efficacy*, whilſt applied to living perſons to keep them from it, and account the other at leaſt very likely.

(*y*) Laym. Theol. Mar. l. 5. Tr. 7. c. 7. n. 1, 3.

(*z*) de Ind. l. 1. c. 14.

Indulgences out of policy reſerved to the Pope alone.

21. It is alſo a Politick Contrivance, to reſerve the pretence of this Authority to the *Pope alone* to ſet free ſouls out

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out of Purgatory. For if there were any such thing as *Purgatory*, and any such *Treasury* in the Church of Satisfactions, and any power left to the Church to dispense these at pleasure to them who want a share in them (in all which the *Roman* Church runs into strange exorbitancies) there can be no reason to *appropriate* this power to the Pope, unless we will call a device of Policy to exalt the dignity of the *Roman See*, a Reason. Their Writers grant, that *other Bishops* may give to the living some Indulgences, but this (*a*) to the *souls departed*, and with respect to Purgatory, they make peculiar to the Pope. And both their private Authors, and the Bulls of Indulgence themselves, found this Authority in the *power of binding and loosing*, and of *remitting and retaining sins*, (which indeed contains an excellent and great authority, which deserves to be better understood, but is grosly abused in the *Roman* Church) and therefore in this special *case*, every *Priest* hath as much a right to claim this authority, as the Pope himself; since he can do altogether as much in this case. The order of *Priesthood* is acknowledged to be the *highest order* in the Ecclesiastical Offices, by the great Patrons of the Papal power, and is so declared in (*b*) the *Roman Catechism*; they grant the Priest to have a power to offer *propitiatory Sacrifices*, for the quick and the *dead*, and own him to have such a power of *absolution*, as thereby to put persons with Attrition into a state of grace, and to deliver them from eternal destruction, and give them a title to eternal life. But that the power of *delivering souls* out of Purgatory, by the Benefit of Indulgences, may still be reserved to the Pope, they of the Church of *Rome* declare, that the grant of Indulgences is (*c*) not from the power of *order* but of *Jurisdiction*, and thereupon they place it in the Pope alone. But as to this case of delivering souls out of Purgatory, they forget themselves when they again assert (*d*) that the Pope doth not do this by a *power of Jurisdiction*, but by proposing or exhibiting to God *satisfactions*, and by *suffrages* and prayers, entreating Gods acceptance of them. But thus much

(*a*) Laym. ubi sup. c. 4. n. 2.

(*b*) de Ord. Sacram. p. 323.

(*c*) Bell. de Ind. l. 1. c. 11. Laym. ubi sup. c. 1. n. 4.

(*d*) Bell ib. c. 14. q. 2. Laym. ib. c. 7. n. 3.

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can be alſo done, according to their Doctrine, by every *Prieſt*, who offereth the Sacrifice of the Maſs, (*e*) for the *Quick and the Dead*, for *Sins*, *Puniſhment and Satisfactions*. The Pope indeed in his Indulgencies, is pretended to preſent to God the *Satisfactions of the Saints*, together with thoſe of Chriſt; but beſides that the *Satisfactions of Chriſt* muſt be of themſelves ſufficient, the act of the Papal Indulgence being done out of the Sacrament, doth not include a proper *propitiatory Sacrifice*, and is therefore inferior to the act of the Prieſt in the Maſs: And it is the propitiatory Sacrifice, which muſt give the value to the *Satisfactions of the Saints*. So that this great claim of peculiar authority in this caſe unto the *Roman* Biſhop, is without any ſolid foundation upon their own Doctrinal Principles, and is wholly founded upon Policy, to create the higher apprehenſions of the *Papal excellency*: Only ſomething is ſaid, to make it paſſable and plauſible.

(*e*) Conc. Trident.

and to Rome *in the year of* Jubilee.

22. The laſt thing I ſhall here conſider, is, the policy of *making void* all Indulgencies though plenary, and all faculties of Indulgence granted to any other place, or perſons, or upon any conditions whatſoever, ſave only what is granted at *Rome* on the year of *Jubilee*, which is now every twenty fifth year; ſave that it was a peculiar favour of *Greg.* 13. (*f*) to the Lady at *Laureto*, that *Indulgentiis toto terrarum orbe, ut fieri ſolet, ſuſpenſis in Urbis gratiam, unam excepit Ædem Lauretanam*; *When Indulgences were ſuſpended according to cuſtom, throughout the whole World, for the benefit of the City of* Rome, *that ſingular place was alone excepted.* Had the *good of men* been the principal deſign of theſe Indulgencies, it would have been a Work of much greater mercy, and care of the welfare of men, that *plenary Indulgencies* might conſtantly have been granted in all Countreys, to them who ſhould perform the *conditions* required. But as the benefit of Indulgencies, is wholly appropriated to *Rome* every twenty fifth year; ſo the *Papal* Bull requires the performance of three days faſting, and alſo Prayers and *giving Alms*. And ſome of their Caſuiſts aſſert,

(*f*) Turſellin. Hiſt. Lauret. l. 4. c. 22.

assert, (g) that all this must be done in *one week*, or others at farthest affirm it must be done within *fifteen days* whilst the Jubilee continues, as a *Condition* necessary to partake of the benefit of the Indulgence. And consequently their *alms*, being confined to those days, must by all persons then attending at *Rome* be given there, to the *great enriching* the Wealth and Revenues of that Church: or though some may be there devoted to the service of the Church in other places; it is to be expected, that that Church in a more particular consideration be then regarded, and interested therein.

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(g) Laym. Th. Mor. l. 5. Tr. 7. c. 8. n. 10.

23. The result of this whole Chapter is, that if disorderly disturbing the *peace* of the Church and the World, and the unjust invading others *rights*; if undermining and disregarding true *piety*; if undervaluing the dignity of *Christ*, and the Majesty of God; and setting up and serving *politick interests* and designs instead of Religion and true goodness, be things loathsom and contrary to Christianity; there must then be sufficient cause for great dislike of, and averseness from the Church of *Rome*, which promotes all these things by its Doctrines and allowed and enjoined practices.

CHAP.

Sect. I.

CHAP. III.

Of our Diſſenters, *where ſome of the different ſorts of them are firſt particularly conſidered, and then follows a more general conſideration of them jointly.*

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Of Quakers.

1. OUr *Diſſenters* do not only lie under the Cenſure of private perſons, but even of our publick Laws and Conſtitutions; and therefore I ſhall faithfully and calmly without prejudice enquire, Whether there be not in them juſt and great cauſe of blame. Now theſe are not all of one Body ſo much as the *Romaniſts* are, (though they alſo have their different parties) but are more divided in their ſeveral ways of Communion and profeſſion; and are only united ſo far, as to eſpouſe the ſame general intereſt againſt our eſtabliſhed Government. And therefore that I may be the more clear and impartial, I ſhall firſt take ſome view of the ſeveral moſt famed Parties of them ſeparately and diſtinctly; and then conſider them jointly.

2. And it is a matter of ſad reflection, that when the ancient Chriſtian zeal contended ſo much for that Unity which our Religion earneſtly injoineth, the Spirit of Diviſion hath ſo far prevailed amongſt them who withdraw from our Church; that beſides their unwarrantable ſeparation from it, great numbers of them have run into other ſelect

and

and distinct parties, and many of them very monstrous. S. *Austin* observed that when the *Donatists* forsook the Catholick Church, (*a*) they fell into divers parties among themselves, *inter ipsos multa facta sunt schismata, alii atque alii separant*, and of these the *Maximinianists* were the most inconsiderable. And amongst us we had formerly wretched improvements of *Antinomianism* into the lewdness of the *Ranters*; of seditious Principles, into the fierceness of the *Fifth Monarchy men*; and of separation into *Quakerism*, which is fartheſt removed from the Communion of the Christian Church, and from many weighty points of the Christian Doctrine. The giddy progress of separation was complained of in this Kingdom by one who (if I mistake not) is now not only a practiser, but a Patron thereof, who not amiss resembled it (*b*) to the several peelings of an *Onion*, where first one is taken off by it self, and parted, and then another, till at last there is nothing left but what is apt to draw tears from the eyes of the Beholder. And the ill effect of our divisions is so manifest, that Dr. *Owen* acknowledgeth that (*c*) it will be granted, that the Glory of God, the Honour of Christ, the progress of the Gospel, with the Edification and peace of the Church, are deeply concerned in them, and highly prejudiced by them. And since the several parties condemn and disapprove each other, it is manifest from thence that all of them (at most one only excepted) must be justly blameable for proceeding upon false Principles, and unsound Assertions. And if any separating party can justifie it self, it must be able to plead truly, and manifest, that the Church from which it departs, is so corrupt in Doctrine or Worship, that it cannot Communicate therewith without sin; and that its differing from it is founded upon its casting off such things as are really sinful and evil, still retaining and embracing all such things as are true and good, even all the rules of Faith and Life, and due Order, which the Christian Religion doth direct and include.

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(*a*) Cont. Epist. Parmen. l. 3. c. 4. & lib. de Hæres. n. 69.

(*b*) J. H.

(*c*) Of Evangelical Love, p. 2.

3. Begin-

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3. Beginning with the *Quakers*, I might take notice of their want of ordinary civil and courteous behaviour, and outward expreſſions of reverence to Governours; when Chriſtianity injoins kindneſs, humility, courteouſneſs, and the due expreſſions of them to all men, and honourable reſpect to be given to Superiors. I might alſo mention their condemning the uſe of an Oath, even in judicial proceedings, which if rightly undertaken, is an act of Religion in a ſolemn acknowledging the Omniſcience and righteouſneſs of God; and is the moſt effectual way for the diſcovery of truth, the maintaining juſtice, preſerving rights, and ending ſtrife. But waving very many blameable errors received amongſt them, I ſhall inſiſt on four things, which their Teachers have both in their Writings and Diſcourſes, vigorouſly aſſerted; which are of ſuch a nature, that thoſe who embrace theſe Principles, and practiſe according to them, may well be eſteemed to be as far from true Chriſtianity, as any perſons who pretend to the name of Chriſtians. Yet in ſo wild and Enthuſiaſtick a Sect, I do not undertake to give aſſurance that they in all things do all of them hold the ſame opinions, but do hope ſome of them may be drawn off from ſome of theſe evil Doctrines and Poſitions.

Here I ſhall obſerve,

4. *Firſt*, Their denial of, and caſting reproachful expreſſions upon the Holy and Glorious Trinity. The acknowledging the Trinity is a great part of the Chriſtian Faith, our Creed directing us to believe in *God* the Father Almighty, and in *Jeſus Chriſt* his only Son our Lord, and in the *Holy Ghoſt*. And (*d*) the two firſt General Councils of the Chriſtian Church, were in a good part imployed in vindicating and aſſerting this Doctrine againſt the *Arian* and *Macedonian* Hereſie. And this Chriſtian Faith is not only contained in, and plainly deduced from the Holy Scriptures; but is ſummarily expreſſed in that form of Chriſtian Baptiſm which our Saviour eſtabliſhed, when he commanded

(*d*) Conc. Nicen. & Conſtantinopol.

manded his Apoſtles *to Baptize in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt.* And this Baptiſmal form which the Holy Scriptures expreſs, is ſo conſiderable a teſtimony to the Doctrine of the Trinity, that many of thoſe Hereticks who denied the Trinity, thought themſelves concerned not to own this generally eſtabliſhed form of Chriſtian Baptiſm, but boldly undertook to innovate and change that form our Lord had ordained, and his Church from him (*e*) had univerſally received. Upon this account (*f*) *Eunomius* altered the Baptiſmal form, not Baptizing *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt,* but into the *death of Chriſt.* And amongſt the *Arians,* who owned not the *Son* to be co-eternal and of the ſame ſubſtance with the *Father,* the form of Baptiſm was perverted; and (*g*) *Theodorus Lector* relates concerning an *Arian* Biſhop, who Baptized *into the Name of the Father by the Son, and in the Holy Ghoſt.* And before theſe, when *Paulus Samoſatenus* denied the Divinity of Chriſt, his followers the *Paulianiſts* were injoined by the Council of (*h*) *Nice* to be re-baptized, ſince the Baptiſmal form by them uſed (*i*) was not into the Holy Trinity, which he did not acknowledge. And that one God in Trinity in whom the members of the Catholick Chriſtian Church believed, and into whoſe Name they were Baptized, he is the object of the Chriſtian Worſhip and Service; and with one heart doth that Church give glory to the *Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt:* but they who diſown the Trinity, cannot be expected to perform this Worſhip and Service thereto.

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(*e*) Juſt. Mart. Apol. 2. Tert. de Bapt. c. 6. & 13.

(*f*) Sozom. Hiſt. l. 6. c. xx.

(*g*) Theod. Lect. Collect. l. 2.

(*h*) Conc. Nic. c. 19.

(*i*) v. Juſtel. in Cod. Eccl. c. univ. 19.

5. But beſides what might be cited out of ſome of the *Quakers* Books againſt the Trinity, I ſhall take the liberty to give a little account of what my ſelf hath formerly been concerned in. Almoſt three and twenty years ſince, ſome of the chief *Quakers* being buſie in theſe parts, two of their Principal Teachers ſent to me *Nine Queſtions,* or *Poſitions* rather, challenging me to diſpute with them; the firſt of which was againſt the three Perſons of the Deity, and the other took in all thoſe things I here diſcourſe of againſt the

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Quakers, with more alſo. I then accepted this challenge, and we went through all theſe nine in three days diſcourſe. In the firſt day they plainly declared themſelves againſt the three Perſons of the Trinity; much as they had done about the ſame time in their Conference with (*k*) Mr. *Smith* at *Cambridge*. At that time in the Year 1659, I had the opportunity of charging *George Whitehead*, in the preſence of *George Fox*, and as great a number of other Witneſſes as the ſpacious room in which we were could contain, with as horrid and blaſphemous words againſt the Trinity as I ever read or heard of, which were contained in a Book written by him, and three other *Quakers* againſt one Mr. *Tounſend*, which was Intituled *Iſhmael and his Mother caſt out*. I even tremble to write the words, which the licentiouſneſs of thoſe times gave way to, (*l*) *The three Perſons which thou wouldſt divide out of one like a Conjurer, are denied, and thou ſhut up with them in perpetual darkneſs, for the Lake and the Pit.* But he neither did nor could deny that this wicked aſſertion was written and publiſhed by him and his Companions: and the ſame thing was urged againſt him out of the ſame Book at the Conference at *Cambridge*.

(*k*) The *Quaker* diſarm'd.

(*l*) Iſhmael, &c. p. 16.

6. Sometime after this, as if they had a mind to ſhew themſelves particularly zealous in the oppoſition of the Holy Trinity, I received a paper (*m*) of Five *Queries*, containing very many branches under them, wholly levelled againſt the Doctrine of the Trinity, and ſubſcribed by *George Whitehead*, and *George Fox*. And after I had returned an Anſwer to theſe, I received another large paper containing a long Harangue againſt the Holy Trinity, with *George Whitehead*'s name alone ſubſcribed. In this paper which I have by me, it is declared, That to call three diſtinct perſons in the Trinity, are Popiſh terms, and names the Papiſts do call the Godhead by. And concerning the eternal generation of the Son of God, it is there ſaid, Thou art one with the Papiſts in thy Doctrine in this thing, who in one of their Creeds do affirm, That Chriſt is God begotten before all Worlds, when he was begotten as to his Sonſhip and

(*m*) Directed to them, that affirm that there are three diſtinct Perſons in the Godhead, and that the Father is the firſt, and the Word the ſecond, and the Spirit the third: and that the ſecond was begotten as to his Godhead.

and Manhood, and in time brought forth and manifeſt amongſt the Sons of men. Thus the moſt excellent truths may be miſrepreſented under odious names, and by erroneous perſons be called Popiſh. Sect. I.

7. *Secondly*, Their diſparaging the Holy Scriptures, which are the Rule of the Chriſtian Faith and Religion. The Scriptures contain the Prophetical and Apoſtolical Doctrine; and this Doctrine is ſo certain and full, *that if an Angel from Heaven preach any other Goſpel*, S. *Paul* denounceth him to *be accurſed*. But their denying the Scriptures to be the word of God, (though they admit them to contain truth) and their ſetting up the Light within them as their great Rule (both which are done frequently in their Writings and Conferences) is that which tends to undermine the Authority of the Divine Writings, and to ſubſtitute another rule which is very defective, various and uncertain, and of dangerous conſequence. For if we conſider men as they truly are, the Light within them is the light of Reaſon and natural Conſcience, with thoſe improvements of knowledge and underſtanding which the Chriſtian Revelation hath made in the minds and ſentiments of men. Now though this be very conſiderable and needful to be attended to; yet to make this and not the Holy Scripture the main Rule and Guide in matters of Chriſtian Faith and life, is to prefer the light of Nature with the advantages it hath from Chriſtian converſe and Oral Tradition (or the delivery of truth from one to another, according to the thoughts, opinions and judgements of men, though mixed with many errors and much uncertainty) before the infallible and unerring direction of the Holy Spirit in the Divine Scriptures. And while the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* diſparaged the Scriptures in preferring the Traditions of their Elders; and the *Romiſh* Church doth much to the ſame purpoſe, this Poſition of this Novel Sect is rather more unaccountable, than either of thoſe other practices. For though they eſtabliſhed miſtaken, falſe and erroneous Rules, yet the

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things dictated thereby were approved by the joint conſideration of many ſelect men, whom they eſteemed men of greateſt underſtanding; while this way directs every man, how corrupt and erroneous ſoever his mind may be, to ſet up his own thoughts and apprehenſions, to be a ſufficient Rule and Guide. And this muſt ſuppoſe every mans own conceptions to be infallible, though they be never ſo contrary to one another, or to the Divine Revelation.

8. But if we conſider the followers of this Sect according to the pretences of many of them, the Light within them, muſt have chief reſpect to ſome Enthuſiaſtick motions and impulſes. Such things were pretended to by the * *Meſſalians* and other Hereticks of old: But beſides what may be ſaid againſt ſuch pretences in general, the manifeſt falſhood of them is in theſe particular caſes apparent from the plain errors they aſſert contrary to the ſure Doctrine of Chriſtianity. And to ſet up any Enthuſiaſtick rule of Religion includeth a diſparaging the Revelation of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, which is the right inſtruction in the true Chriſtian Religion; and this is ordinarily alſo blaſphemous againſt God, in falſly making him the author of ſuch errors by vainly pretending inſpiration, which are evidently contrary to what he hath truly revealed by Chriſt and his Goſpel.

* Theod. Hiſt. Eccl. l. 4. c. 10.

9. *Thirdly*, Their diſowning Chriſts ſpecial Inſtitutions; *to wit*, the eſtabliſhing the Communion of his true Catholick Church, and his Miniſtry, and the Holy Sacraments. Their diſregard to the Communion of the Chriſtian Church, and their frequent reproaches againſt it, and the Miniſters thereof, are very notorious. But I ſhall here chiefly inſiſt on what concerns the Sacraments, which Holy inſtitutions they generally diſuſe; and againſt the uſe of theſe their Teachers have both ſpoken and written. Now this is a thing ſo evil and of ſuch dangerous conſequence, that beſides the diſobedience to what our Lord hath conſtituted

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ſtituted and commanded by his plain precepts, they hereby reject thoſe things which the Goſpel appoints to be eminent means of Communion and Union with the Church and Body of Chriſt. Such things are both the Sacraments, both that of *Baptiſm* and that of the *Lords Supper*. 1 Cor. 12. 13. *chap.* 10. 16, 17. And this Union and Communion according to the ordinary method of the Goſpel Diſpenſation is neceſſary to Memberſhip with the Catholick Church. And the diſowning and rejecting theſe things, is the refuſing the means of grace which God hath appointed, for the conveying the bleſſings of his Covenant, and particularly the remiſſion of ſins, to ſuch perſons, who by performing the other conditions of the Covenant, are duly qualified for the receiving the ſame in the uſe of theſe adminiſtrations, *Act.* 22. 16. *Mat.* 26. 28. Our Lord appointed Baptiſm to be a part of the condition of obtaining ſalvation, *Mar.* 16. 16. *He that believeth and is Baptized ſhall be ſaved.* And the ancient Chriſtians had ſuch an high eſteem thereof, that *Tertullian* begins his Book *de Baptiſmo* on this manner, *Fœlix Sacramentum aquæ, quia ablutis delictis priſtinæ cæcitatis, in vitam æternam liberamur*; *Happy Sacrament of Baptiſm, becauſe the faults of our former blindneſs being waſhed away, we are ſet free unto eternal life.* And our Lord hath declared, that *except we eat his fleſh, and drink his blood, we have no life in us*, Joh. 6. 53. and hath appointed the Holy Communion to be an eminent and peculiar way *of eating his Body, and drinking his Blood.* And what then can be ſaid for them who groſsly neglect, and eſpecially for them who declare againſt, and totally reject theſe Sacred Inſtitutions? And if under the Old Teſtament God was ſo highly diſpleaſed with him who neglected Circumciſion, as to denounce him to be *cut off from his people*, Gen. 17. 14. and declared that they who attended not on the *Paſſeover, ſhould bear their ſin*, Num. 9. 13. he cannot be pleaſed with the violating thoſe Inſtitutions which are of an higher nature, being eſtabliſhed by the Son of God himſelf under the Goſpel.

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10. *Fourthly*, The Doctrine of perfection as held by them who declare themſelves throughly free from ſin. For this undermines all penitential exerciſes, which take in the great part of the true Chriſtian life; and makes void confeſſion of ſin, and ſorrow for it, together with prayer and application to the Sacrifice of Chriſt for remiſſion; and a diligent care of amendment. We acknowledge and aſſert that every pious Chriſtian doth overcome the power of ſin, ſo that he doth not ſerve it, but lives in the practice of good Conſcience towards God and man. This is ſuch a life that the Holy Scriptures ſpeak much of the excellency and real holineſs and purity thereof, and its freedom from ſin. And the ancient Eccleſiaſtical Writers, give large and high commendations thereof. *Polycarp* ſaith (*n*) that he who hath charity is free from all ſin: which hath ſome affinity with thoſe words of the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 13. 8. *he that loveth another, hath fulfilled the Law.* And *Origen* ſpeaks of the Chriſtian man as being pure from ſin, (*o*) and having left off to ſin; which is of like nature with not *continuing any longer therein*, Rom. 6. 2. as having departed from a vicious, wicked and impure life. And the Chriſtian life is a perfect life, as it greatly outdoth the practice of evil men, and is in it ſelf excellent, and contains a reſemblance of God, *Mat.* 5. 44--48. and as it is guided by the fear of God, and directed to the *eſchewing evil, and doing what is juſt and good*, Job 1. 1. Pſal. 37. 37.

(*n*) Ep. ad Philip. p. 16.

(*o*) Cont. Celſ. l. 3. p. 148, 149.

11. And every true Chriſtian doth and muſt perform all the neceſſary conditions in the Goſpel-Covenant for acceptance with God, and obtaining Salvation; or otherwiſe he can never be ſaved. And the practice of Faith and true holineſs; the ſubduing luſts and evil affections; and being renewed after God, is included in theſe conditions. But the terms and conditions of the Goſpel-Covenant are not the ſame thing, but muſt be differently conſidered from the rules of duty which the Goſpel injoins. For a conſtant practice of every duty towards God and man, and a careful per-

performance of every moral precept without any transgression thereof is injoined more highly under the Gospel, than ever it was before. But the conditions of the Gospel-Covenant, are upon more mild and gentle terms of grace, than were contained under the foregoing Dispensations: for they admit and approve true uprightness and sincerity of obedience, though there may some failings and imperfections attend it; and they allow of repentance, and promise mercy and pardon to those offenders who are truly penitent. So that the rules of duty considered in their large extent, do so far shew what we are obliged to perform, that whensoever we fail in the least part thereof, we thereupon need the benefit of the pardoning mercy of God, and the atonement and expiation of our Saviour; to which when we discern our failing in the exercise of self-reflexion, we are to apply our selves according to the directions of the Gospel, with a pious and penitent behaviour. But the great and necessary conditions of the Gospel and the Covenant of grace, contain those things which are of such indispensable necessity to be performed and observed by us, that the mercy of God will never accept of those who neglect them, nor will it pardon the omission thereof. Such conditions under the Gospel Revelation, are the embracing the Christian Faith, the diligent exercise of a holy life, and under the sense of our failings, an humble address to God through Christ for his mercy, pardon and supplies of further grace, with penitential exercises. Sect. I.

12. And in the best of men who exercise themselves diligently in piety and the discharge of a good conscience, there may be many things wherein they fail and come short of the exact performance of what they ought to do. And therefore our Saviour taught his Disciples ordinarily to pray, *forgive us our Trespasses*; and appointed that petition to be part of that prayer which he directed and commanded them to use. Upon which words of the *Lords Prayer*, (*p*) S. *Cyprian* observes, how every one is hereby taught and instructed that he offends every day, when he is command-

(*p*) Cyp. de Orat. Dom.

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commanded daily *to pray for* the pardon of *his ſins*. And he obſerves alſo how conſtant a need every perſon hath of ſeeking for and obtaining pardon for his failings, in that upon this account our Lord urgeth the neceſſity of our conſtant care of forgiving others, becauſe otherwiſe our heavenly Father will not forgive us; and therefore he gives this as a rule to be always practiſed whenſoever we pray, *Mark* 11. 25. *When ye ſtand praying, forgive if ye have ought againſt any, that your Father alſo which is in Heaven may forgive you your treſpaſſes.* And from the conſideration of the *Lords Prayer*, (q) S. *Auſtin* well obſerves, that if the Chriſtian ſtate here were ſo far perfect as to be free from all offences, our Saviour would never have taught ſuch a Prayer to his Church, to be conſtantly uſed by his Diſciples when they pray, and even by the Apoſtles themſelves. And in the Inſtitution of the *Lords Supper*, our Saviour tendred the Sacrifice of his Body and Blood to be received by Chriſtians in the continued adminiſtration of that Ordinance, for the remiſſion of ſins. All which doth manifeſt that Chriſtian life and Goſpel-obedience, which is accepted upon the conditions of the Covenant of grace, is not an abſolute ſinleſs obedience, though it doth include a real purity of heart, and integrity of converſation. And the pious Chriſtian is ſometimes called perfect, with reſpect to that excellency to which he hath attained, *Phil.* 3. 15, 16. and yet at the ſaid time in a different ſenſe is not acknowledged to be perfect, *Phil.* 3. 12. by reaſon of the defects which are ſtill remaining. Hence the Holy Scriptures oft ſpeak to this purpoſe, *that in many things we offend all*, and that *there is no man that lives and ſins not*, *and* that *if we ſay we have no ſin, we deceive our ſelves, and the truth is not in us.*

(q) Aug. Ep. 89.

13. And we further aſſert and acknowledge, that in the Chriſtian ſtate there is alſo a perfection by way of compariſon, in them who have arrived to greater degrees, and a more eminent height and growth in Chriſtian graces and vertues, than others: and this excellent ſtate is very deſirable, and ought to be diligently endeavoured by every pi-

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ous man. But no ſuch perſons either will or can truly ſay, that henceforth they have no need of any intereſt in the mercy of God for the forgiving their failings, or in the benefits of Chriſt's Merits and Sacrifice, for obtaining thereby pardon and remiſſion. But (r) *Ignatius*, when ready to lay down his life by Martyrdom, acknowledged his imperfection. And (ſ) *Clemens Alexandrinus* deſcribes the Chriſtian, that his failings muſt be as little as is poſſible, and he muſt ſtrive againſt all diſorders of affections, and diſown all cuſtoms of ſin: and it is an excellent thing to be free from all fault, but this is the ſtate of God. The imperfections of ſuch men as *Aſa* and *Job*, and others who are called perfect, are noted in the Scripture. And that ſame Epiſtle in which S. *John* ſpeaks ſo much of him that is *born of God* that he *ſins not*, as having rejected a vicious and evil life, *and being ſet free from the ſervice thereof*, he alſo declares againſt him *who ſaith he hath no ſin*, 1 Joh. 1. 8. directs confeſſion of ſin, *v.* 9. and ſpeaking concerning thoſe who are in a true Chriſtian ſtate, ſaith, *that Jeſus Chriſt the righteous is the propitiation for our ſins*, 1 Joh. 2. 2. And who, who examines himſelf, can pretend himſelf free from every diſorder in any paſſion or affection, from all failure in word or thought; and that he can be charged with no neglect of any duty at any time, either towards God or man, in any relation whatſoever, nor with any blameable defect in the manner of the performance thereof? And the pretence to perfection and ſinleſs practice is the more fond and unreaſonable in this Sect, becauſe of the groſs and heinous errors of judgment, and conſequently of practice which they are guilty of, together with many words of falſhood, cenſoriouſneſs or uncharitableneſs.

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(r) Ep. ad Eph. p. 18. & Philad. p. 41. Ed. Voſ.

(ſ) Pæd. l. 1. c. 2.

14. Now the great hurt and danger of this opinion, concerning perfection, is, *Firſt*, That it makes void ſuch duties as confeſſion, repentance, & application to the benefits of Chriſts expiatory Sacrifice, which things are not only injoined upon Chriſtians by the frequent commands of the Goſpel; but are alſo propoſed as the conditions for obtaining the

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pardoning mercy and favour of God: and the exercise of repentance, and *bringing forth fruits meet for repentance*, contains very much of the practical part of the duties of the Christian Religion. *Secondly*, It greatly misrepresents the Covenant of Grace, as if together with the rules of an holy life, and the assistances enabling thereto, it did not, for the encouraging our best and sincere endeavours, make allowances for the imperfections of the upright mans obedience, and propose pardon to them who are truly penitent. If the Gospel did not admit these gracious terms and conditions, the state of the best sort of men would be miserable. But S. *John* joins these two together, 1 *Joh.* 2. 1. the strictness of the Gospel rule, that will not allow of any sin, *My little children these things write I unto you, that ye sin not*: and the gracious conditions of pardon through the merits of Christ; *if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation*, &c.

15. Wherefore we acknowledge the Christian life to have in its degree an Evangelical perfection; whereby in the upright Service of God it is free from the dominion of sin, and is diligent in the progress of grace and piety, and obtains pardon for its offences. But with respect to its practice, as (*t*) S. *Austin* observed, *ad ejus perfectionem pertinet ipsius imperfectionis & in veritate cognitio, & in humilitate confessio: It is a branch of his perfection truly to know, and humbly to acknowledge his imperfection.* For as he speaks in another place, (*t*) *Who can be compleatly perfect, but he who observes all the Commandments; amongst which this is one, injoined upon all Christians, that we must pray*, forgive us our trespasses, *quam orationem usque ad finem seculi tota dicit Ecclesia, This is the prayer which the whole Church maketh to the end of this world.*

(*t*) Aug. ad Bonif. l. 3. c. 7.

(*u*) Retrac. l. 1. c. 19.

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Of the Fifth-Monarchy *men, and the* Millenary *Opinion.*

1. THough I ſhall wave divers Sects which appeared in our late times of Confuſion, as *Seekers*, *Ranters*, and various Enthuſiaſts; I ſhall take ſome notice of the *Fifth-Monarchy* men, who, ſince his Majeſties return to his Kingdom, made an attempt to put in practice their evil and wretched Principles. The notion of our Saviour's perſonal Reign a thouſand years upon Earth, hath deceived many perſons in the Chriſtian Church, through their miſunderſtanding ſome expreſſions in the *Apocalypſe* (to which purpoſe alſo they applied many other Scriptures): though the ancient opinions of many worthy perſons in the Chriſtian Church who were led away by this error, did ſtill retain the meek and peaceable temper of Chriſtianity. (a) S. *Hierome* in many places ſpeaks of this opinion as a *Jewiſh* error, and perſtringeth the embracers thereof as *Judaizers*. And indeed this notion had ſome conſiderable affinity with the *Jewiſh* expectation concerning the *Meſſias*, that he ſhould appear as a Temporal Prince, to Reign glorioufly and powerfully upon Earth: and thoſe Chriſtians who were led away with this miſtake, looked for the reſtoring and rebuilding the City of *Jeruſalem*, when this Kingdom ſhould appear, with other things too much favouring of *Judaiſm*.

(a) In Eſai. l. 9. in fin. l. 15. in init & paſſim.

2. And that this earthly and worldly Reign of Chriſt was very agreeable to the dreams and fancies of the *Jews*, may be yet ſomewhat further manifeſted by obſerving that even (b) the *Jewiſh Talmud* ſpeaks of the time of a thouſand years; when God ſhall renew the World, and he alone ſhall be exalted and Reign, and the righteous ſhall enjoy

(b) Gem. in Sanhed. c. 11. n. 11.

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outward and temporal delights in the world. And ſome of the *Rabbins* do more particularly expreſs their ſenſe concerning this ſtate, inſomuch that in the Commentaries of *R. Abraham* on *Dan.* 12. 2. as his words are related by (*c*) *Cocceius*, it is ſaid that as he underſtands that Prophecy, the juſt who died in exile out of the Land of *Iſrael*, at the coming of the *Meſſias*, ſhould be raiſed again, and have all manner of delightful Food, Fiſhes, Fowls and great Cattel; and then ſhould die a ſecond time, and be raiſed again at the Reſurrection of the dead, and then ſhould be in the other world, where they ſhould neither eat nor drink, but injoy the brightneſs of the glory of God. But ſo far as theſe things relate to earthly and ſenſual pleaſures, they might well enough ſuit the temper and diſpoſition of the *Jews*, and were agreeable to thoſe carnal delights which (*d*) *Cerinthus* talked of in the Kingdom of Chriſt on Earth for a thouſand years; but ſuch things ſavour not of the true Spirit of Chriſtianity, but are plainly oppoſite thereto.

(*c*) in Exc. Gem. Sanh. ib.

(*d*) Euſ. Hiſt. Eccl. l. 3. c. xxi.

3. But it muſt be acknowledged that there have been divers worthy perſons in the ancient Church, and ſome of late, who have embraced the *Millenary* opinions, but have ſtill retained ſuch Principles and Opinions as are ſuitable to the peaceableneſs and Spiritual purity of Chriſtianity. Such beſides *Papias*, were *Juſtin Martyr*, *Irenæus*, *Apollinarius*, *Tertullian*, *Lactantius* and others of old, and Mr. *Mede* in this laſt age. Theſe looked for the coming of our Saviour with his Martyrs and other Saints raiſed from the dead, to Reign on Earth before the end of the World. Their chief ground was from *Rev.* 20. 4. But their interpretation of thoſe words concerning the Souls of them that were *beheaded*, &c. living and reigning with Chriſt a thouſand years (beſides much that may be otherwiſe ſaid againſt it) cannot agree with *v.* 7, 8, 9. Where after *the thouſand years are ended, Satan ſhall be looſed out of his priſon, and ſhall go out to deceive the Nations, and Gog and Magog ſhall compaſs the camp of the Saints, and the beloved City.* But ſuch

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ſuch things cannot agree to the time of a thouſand years after our Saviours ſecond coming, nor is there indeed any mention made in the foregoing Verſes of Chriſts coming to Reign here upon Earth. And therefore the *Milkenary* Opinion was deſervedly rejected and diſclaimed by (*e*) *Euſebius*, as being againſt the true ſenſe of the Prophetical Scriptures.

(*e*) Hiſt. Eccl. l. 3. c. ult.

4. But according to the Prophetick ſtile, *the living again of thoſe who were dead*, (yea ſo long dead that their bones were dry) is an expreſſion of a Church or State delivered out of affliction and calamity, and advanced to a more proſperous and flouriſhing condition, as is manifeſt from *Ezek.* 37. 2,3, and *v.* 11, 12, 13, 14. and *Iſai.* 26. 19. and the continuing under a depreſſed ſtate is expreſſed by *being ſo dead as not to riſe*, *v.* 14. And when the Church or the Saints of the moſt high are repreſented to poſſeſs the Dominion and Government of the World, or that the Empire of the World ſhould become Chriſtian, and the Rule and Government thereof be adminiſtred by them who profeſſed Chriſtianity, this is ſignified by the Dominion of one like the *Son of man*, and giving him a Kingdom, *Dan.* 7. 13, 14. *and the Saints of the moſt high poſſeſſing the Kingdom*, v. 18, & 22. *and* by being *caught up to God and to his Throne*, Rev. 12. 5. which are expreſſions of like import with that of reigning with Chriſt.

5. But though this miſtake of the *Chiliaſts* had ſo far ſpread it ſelf, that it was entertained by many worthy men in the firſt ages of the Church, I cannot think it to have had ſo univerſal a reception in that time, as ſome very learned men are inclined to believe. S. *Hierome* mentions *Papias* (*f*) to be accounted to have given the firſt riſe to this opinion, and (*g*) *Euſebius* ſpeaks to the ſame purpoſe, who alſo obſerves him to have been a man of good note and eſteem, but of a mean judgment; and that while he was inquiſitive concerning whatſoever he could learn to have been ſpoken by the Apoſtles, and ſome Apoſtolical men, he being too credulous, delivered ſome things as Doctrines and

(*f*) de Script. Eccl. in Pap.
(*g*) Hiſt. Eccl. l. 3. c. λε'. & λϛ'.

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and Parables spoken by our Saviour, which were fabulous. In (*h*) *Justin Martyr*, there are plain expressions that himself and many other Christians embraced this Opinion of the *Chiliasts*, but still it appears that he granted other Christians not to own this assertion. And when (*i*) *Dionysius* of *Alexandria*, writing against the Book of *Nepos* an *Egyptian* Bishop, which he had composed to maintain the opinion of the *Chiliasts*, doth declare, that this Opinion spread from *Arsenoites* had occasioned Schisms and defections in some whole Churches in those parts; this is a plain evidence that the Churches of *Egypt*, and those under *Alexandria* had remained free from receiving the error of the *Chiliasts* till the time of *Nepos*, which was in the beginning of the third Century, and divers of them also were soon reduced from it again by the labours and diligence of *Dionysius*, as is expressed in the same place.

(*b*) Just. Mart. Dial. cum Tryph.
(*i*) Euseb. Hist Eccl. l. 7. c. xxv.

6. But though this Opinion in its general consideration be an error manifest enough, occasioned by the misunderstanding of the Prophetical expressions, which suitably to the visions and representations they had of things, is more Figurative and Emblematical than other parts of the Scriptures: yet that which I chiefly aim at, is a far worse superstructure, which is built upon this foundation. For there have been a furious and fierce sort of men who embracing this error, have therewith espoused such pernicious Principles and Practices, that the bare naming them, is enough to shew them grosly inconsistent with Christianity, whilst under a pretence of making way for Christs Kingdom, they do in disorderly and unchristian methods, set up themselves in opposition to other Governours. These are of a seditious temper, but are far from being governed by those Laws and Precepts of Christs Kingdom, which injoin the necessity of peace, and meekness, and being subject. These men when they think fit, are for taking the Sword, as was done by *Venner* and his Company, to fight against the Government and Authority, which they were bound to submit unto; which besides the open Rebel-

bellion in resisting the higher Powers with a presumptuous and daring confidence, shews such a cruel and bloody Spirit as is extremely contrary to the innocency, gentleness and meekness of the Christian Religion. These also were of that ambitious and haughty temper, that whilst they made use of the name of Christ, they attempted thereby to claim to themselves against all right, the possession of Authority and rule, opposing herein the order of the World, the Ordinance of God, and the Gospel rules of humility and obedience. And this behaviour in all these particulars mentioned, is so contrary to the plain Principles of humanity as well as of Christianity, that it may be a convictive instance to let all men see into what strange and abominable miscarriages, the prevalency of the wretched vanity of a wild Enthusiastick Spirit may misguide those men who are deluded thereby.

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Of Anabaptists.

1. IN discoursing of those who are ordinarily among us called *Anabaptists*, I shall take no notice of many evil Opinions and cruel Practices, which those who go under that name have been guilty of, especially in foregin Countries, but shall confine my self wholly to the consideration of *Anabaptism*, not in the strict notion of the word, but as it is commonly understood amongst us. And in this sense it especially includes *Antipædobaptism*, as denying Infant-Baptism, and disowning the persons Baptized in their Infancy, from being truly Baptized, and thereby Members of the Church; and asserting thereupon, that it is necessary

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ceſſary they ſhould be re-baptized. But the evil of this their oppoſition againſt the Baptiſm of Infants, conſiſteth eſpecially in three things.

2. *Firſt*, In that the foundation of this Opinion is untrue, and gives a falſe repreſentation of the grace of God in the New Covenant. For God by his grace, doth receive Infants born in the Church, to be under his Covenant, and to partake of the benefits and bleſſings thereof: and therefore they ought to be admitted to that Ordinance, which is a Seal of that Covenant, and contains a particular tender and application of the benefits thereof unto thoſe who are duly qualified to receive them. And ſince this Covenant owneth Infants to be Members of the Church of God, they ought not to be debarred from the ſolemn admiſſion thereunto. When God made his Covenant with *Abraham*, he extended it to him and to his Seed: and whereas God then appointed *Circumciſion* to be a token of this Covenant, *Gen.* 17. 11. and *a Seal of the righteouſneſs of faith*, Rom. 4. 11. he ſtill commanded that all the *Males* in their infancy ſhould be *Circumciſed*, *Gen.* 17. 12. which is a manifeſt evidence that they were intereſted in this Covenant made with *Abraham*. And this precept of Circumciſion concerning the Infant Males, continued in force until the coming of our Saviour, and thereby Infants born in the *Jewiſh* Church, were owned and received to be members of that Church. Now our Saviours coming was not to confine the Church to narrower limits, but to extend and enlarge it.

3. And it may not be amiſs to obſerve, that the *Jews* themſelves did generally acknowledge that the priviledge of having ſuch Children admitted into their Church in their infancy, whoſe Parents were members thereof, was not peculiar to that Nation alone, but did alſo belong to thoſe who from among the *Gentiles* became Proſelytes to the *Jewiſh* Religion. When they admitted the chief ſort of Proſelytes which were called the Proſelytes of righteouſneſs,

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neſs, this was uſually done (*a*) by Circumciſion together with a kind of Baptiſm, or waſhing them (with reſpect to their uncleanneſs in their *Gentiliſm*) and Sacrifice, as Mr. *Selden*, and Dr. *Lightfoot* and others have obſerved: who alſo have manifeſted from the *Jewiſh* writers, that they did uſually admit Children, even Infants with their Parents. And if the Mother was admitted into the number of this ſort of Proſelytes when ſhe was with Child, that Child afterwards born, was ſuppoſed not to need any other waſhing, but if it was a Male, was received only by Circumciſion. And it alſo appears by the teſtimonies produced by the latter of theſe Writers (*b*) that they ordinarily admitted the Infants of *Gentiles* to be Proſelytes, if they were taken into the care and education of *Iſraelites*: and this was agreeable to what God had eſtabliſhed concerning him who was born in *Abraham*'s Houſe, or bought with money of any ſtranger not of his Seed.

(*a*) Seld. de Synedr. l. 3. c. 3. p. 34, 37 - 40. Hor. Hebr. in Mat. 3. 6.

(*b*) Hor. Heb. ibid.

4. And that the New Teſtament doth particularly admit Infants into the Church of God, and giveth them a right to partake of the benefits of his Covenant, as well as the Old Teſtament did, might be juſtly preſumed, becauſe there is not any thing ſaid or done by our Saviour which doth exclude them, nor is there any thing declared by God, whereby he expreſſeth his altering the terms of his Covenant, ſo as in this particular to confine it into a leſs and ſtraiter compaſs under the Goſpel. But beſides this, there are plain expreſſions in the New Teſtament, that Infants are received as Members of the Church of God, and intereſted in the promiſes of his Covenant under the Chriſtian Diſpenſation. Our Saviour ſaith of them, that *of ſuch is the Kingdom of Heaven*, Mar. 10. 14. and S. *Peter* perſwades the *Jews*, *Act.* 2. 38, 39. *Repent and be baptized— for the promiſe is to you and to your Children*; and the ſame thing may be inferred from other Texts of Scripture. And theſe expreſſions eſpecially conſidering what God had eſtabliſhed and injoined in the time of the Old Teſtament, do ſufficiently declare this ſenſe of the Goſpel-

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Covenant, that Children and Infants are included therein.

5. And whereas the *Judaizers* did earneſtly contend with the Apoſtles, about the neceſſity of Circumciſion, and other *Jewiſh* Rites to be continued in the Church, we read of no conteſt about the admiſſion of their Children into the Church. Had the Apoſtles and the Chriſtian inſtitution herein differed from the Rules received under the Old Teſtament, in not admitting Children into the Church of God; theſe men would no doubt as eagerly have contended with the Apoſtles about this thing as about the other; ſince this was a branch of Gods ancient Covenant, and ſuch a branch as they could not but think to be of high concernment to themſelves and their Poſterity. But the Chriſtian Doctrine plainly acknowledgeth that Children were reputed holy, if but one of their Parents were Chriſtians or Believers; 1 *Cor.* 7. 14. and therefore ſuch Children which otherwiſe had been unclean, were accounted to belong to the Church, by vertue of that relation they had to ſuch Believing Parents. And when the Apoſtles are ſaid to have Baptized perſons and all theirs, or all their Houſhold, upon the conſideration now mentioned, it is not to be doubted but Children and Infants were included in theſe expreſſions, *Act.* 16. 15. and *v.* 33. 1 *Cor.* 1. 16. and alſo in that other precept of *Baptizing all Nations*, and *making them Diſciples*, Mat. 28. 19. And this will receive further confirmation from the ordinary and uſual practice of the ancient Chriſtian Church in Baptizing Infants, which I ſhall by and by mention.

6. Indeed under the Goſpel it was neceſſary that adult perſons, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, ſhould firſt be taught the Chriſtian Doctrine, and own their belief thereof, and undertake the practice of repentance and obedience, before they could be Baptized into the Chriſtian Church. But this gives no ſupport to them who oppoſe the Baptiſm of Infants; ſince even under the Old Teſtament, ſuch perſons who being adult, were received as Proſelytes to the

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Jewish Church, were first to be acquainted with the Law of God, (*d*) and then to profess their owning and believing in the God of *Israel*, before they were admitted into that Church by Circumcision, and other solemn Rites. And this reasonable and necessary observation, with respect to those who attained to years of discretion, was well consistent with their Circumcising Infants: and the Divine Law injoined, that when strangers were desirous to embrace the *Jewish* Religion, and were admitted thereto, all their Males (and therefore even those which were Infants) must be Circumcised, *Exod.* 12. 48.

(*c*) Selden. ubi sup.

7. And those words of S. *Paul*, from which the favourers of *Anabaptism* have endeavoured to prove, that under the New Testament none (and therefore no Infants) are interested in the Gospel-Covenant and Membership of the Christian Church, by being born of Christian Parents, are greatly mistaken. S. *Paul* saith, *Rom.* 9. 6. *They are not all Israel, which are of Israel.* v. 7. *Neither because they are the Seed of Abraham, are they all Children: but in Isaac shall thy Seed be called.* For, 1. These words have no peculiar respect to the time and state of the New Testament; but they give an account how the promise to the Seed of *Abraham* was to be understood, from the very time in which it was made to *Abraham*. And the Apostle here shews, that this Promise and Covenant was particularly fixed upon *Isaac* and his Family, *v.* 7. and then upon *Jacob*, *v.* 13. and yet then Infants were constantly Circumcised. 2. The true sense of these words is, that the Promise and Covenant of God, to and with *Abraham* and his Seed, did not bind him to continue all the posterity of *Ishmael* or other Sons of *Abraham*; nor yet the Posterity of *Esau*, to be his peculiar Church and people, though these were Circumcised, and lineally descended from *Abraham*, but had departed from the Religion, Piety, Faith, and Obedience of their Father *Abraham*. And from hence the Apostle proves that the same promise can be no security to the *Jews* or the Posterity of *Jacob* in their unbelief and disobedience:

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but God can otherwiſe accompliſh his promiſe made to the Seed of *Abraham*, by accompliſhing it to them who walk in the ſteps of the Faith of *Abraham*. 3. As this true ſenſe is wholly alien from proving Infants not to be members of the Chriſtian Church; ſo the ſenſe impoſed upon them by the *Anabaptiſts*, is neither agreeable to the words themſelves, and the ſcope of that place, nor to ſuch other expreſſions of the New Teſtament, as I have above mentioned.

8. *Secondly*, This Opinion and Practice of *Anabaptiſm*, is very uncharitable to Infants born in the Chriſtian Church, upon a double account. For, *Firſt*, The conſequence of this Poſition will be to take away that great hope of Salvation which the true Principles of Chriſtianity do afford, concerning Chriſtian Infants dying in their infancy. I acknowledge that this conſequence concerning all Infants is not owned by thoſe who hold this erroneous opinion in denying Infant-Baptiſm, who run into other errors to avoid this. But yet this is deducible from their Aſſertion; and therefore I charge this uncharitableneſs to be a proper conſequent of this opinion. For ſince Chriſtians are Baptized into the *Body* or Church of *Chriſt*, 1 Cor. 12. 12. and are thereby entred as members thereof: if Infants be denied to have any right to Baptiſm, or to be capable of being Baptized, they cannot then be owned to be members of the viſible Church of Chriſt, and parts of his Body. And they who are ſuppoſed to be excluded from the viſible Church by Gods ſpecial inſtitution, and to be thereby made uncapable of being received as members thereof, cannot well be preſumed to be admitted into membership with the inviſible Church; if we conſider what God himſelf hath declared concerning the power of the Keys, and of Binding and Looſing upon Earth. And thoſe great priviledges of the New Covenant, of which eternal Salvation is the chief, belong to that Church, which is the Body of Chriſt, and to the lively members thereof: *For Chriſt is*

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the Saviour of this body, Eph. 5. 23. And this Body which is his Church, is that which he will *present to himself, having neither spot, nor wrinkle, nor any such thing*, v. 27. And whereas Baptism is the *laver of regeneration*, Tit. 3. 5. if Infants are not capable of being partakers *of that washing of water* whereby the Church is *cleansed and sanctified*, Eph. 5. 26. and of the laver of regeneration, and of regeneration it self also, *they cannot enter into the Kingdom of God*, Joh. 3. 3, 5. Sect. III.

9. But this opinion is further uncharitable to Infants, in denying to them such means of grace as the Gospel of our Saviour doth afford them, and the Christian Church hath from the beginning alwayes acknowledged to belong to them. All the Ordinances and special Institutions of Christ tend to the great advantage and good of them who do aright partake of them, and are useful to their spiritual and eternal welfare and benefit; and so particularly is Christian Baptism. Of this I have particularly discoursed in (*d*) another place. And as the Scriptures sufficiently express the great benefit of Baptism, with respect to regeneration and remission of sins; so whosoever hath a due reverence for our Lord and Saviour, can by no means entertain such low thoughts of his Institutions, as to think them of no considerable usefulness to them who duly receive them. But this piece of uncharitableness to Infants, is much worse, and more hurtful and prejudicial to them than the former. For the opinion from whence the former consequent was deduced, being untrue, the consequence it self is also false, and so hath no real influence or effect upon the state of Infants, nor are damaged thereby, whereas they are truly prejudiced by being denied the means of grace.

(*d*) Libert. Eccles. B. 1. c. 5. Sect. 3. 4. 5.

10. On this account the Christian Church in the first ages thereof, and in a continued succession from thence to this time, hath admitted Infants to be Baptized, and thought it self bound so to do. S. *Austin*, (*e*) declares this practice to have *authoritatem universæ Ecclesiæ, procul dubio*

(*e*) de peccat. Mer. & remiss. l. 1. c. 26.

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dubio per Dominum & Apostolos traditam: the Authority of the Universal Church, without doubt delivered by the Lord and the Apostles: and the Doctrine of *Infant-Baptism*, is called by S. *Austin*, (*f*) *firmissima Ecclesiæ fides, a Doctrine of Faith, most firmly and constantly believed in the Church.* And much to the same purpose is frequently expressed by S. *Austin*. To this purpose the determination of (*g*) S. *Cyprian*, and an *African* Council with him, is very manifest. When *Fidus* had written to *Cyprian* his opinion, that Infants ought not to be Baptized within the second or third day of their Birth, or until the eighth day, which was the time appointed for Circumcision; though this opinion allowed and asserted *Infant-Baptism*, S. *Cyprian* largely declares, that not any one of this Council did agree to this opinion; but every one of them judged, *Nulli hominum nato misericordiam Dei & gratiam denegandam, That the mercy and grace of God is to be denied to no Child of man*, i. e. *upon account of their age.* And he there shews, that Infants from the time of their Birth, are not to be prohibited Baptism. And of how great consequence they in those early times judged *Infant-Baptism*, is apparent from this expression relating thereto, (*h*) *quantum in nobis est, si fieri potest, nulla anima perdenda est; as far as is in our power, if it be possible, no soul is to be lost.* The plain testimonies of *Origen*, both upon *Leviticus*, and the Epistle to the *Romans*, and of divers other Fathers and Councils might be added, to manifest the universal reception of *Infant-Baptism* in the Catholick Church. But this having been clearly and sufficiently evidenced by the Historical Theses of (*i*) *Vossius*, upon this Subject of *Pædobaptism*, I shall refer him thither, who would have more large and ample proof hereof.

(*f*) Ep. 28.

(*g*) Ep. 59. ad Fidum.

(*h*) ibid.

(*i*) Thes. Theolog. p. 429, &c.

11. But that learned man truly observes, that there is something which may seem singular in some expressions of *Tertullian* and *Nazianzen*, who though they deny not *Infant-Baptism*, yet intimate the usefulness of deferring the Baptism of Infants, and incline to perswade the same. Now though any singular apprehension of one or two men

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is not to be laid in the balance against the general sense of the Church; I shall however observe something further concerning the sense of both these ancient Writers. *Gr. Nazianzen* doth indeed in his Oration (*k*) concerning Baptism, advise, that if Infants be in no danger of death, their Baptism may be deferred till they be three years old, or somewhat less or more, that themselves may hear something of that Mystery, and give answer. But though he might proceed upon a notion peculiar to himself, it is manifest, that he was no favourer of *Anabaptism*, because in that very place, he both declares the lawfulness of Baptizing Infants as they were Circumcised the eighth day, and the profitableness of Baptism to them that die in their infancy, and also presseth the practice thereof when the Infant is in any danger. But besides all this, it seems to me not improbable, that these words of *Nazianzen* have respect to some special case, and probably to that which was then very ordinary and usual in the Christian Church concerning such Infants, whose Parents were yet unbaptized, either continuing Catechumens according to the discipline of the Church, or else after their embracing Christianity, did long by their own choice and neglect, defer their Baptism. Of this latter sort he discourseth much in this Oration, (*l*) and oft-times, and even in this very place, reprehends the fault of many adult persons who neglected Baptism, and urgeth them to be Baptized, and then proposeth this Question, and gives this Answer concerning Infants.

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(*k*) Orat. 40. p. 458.

(*l*) p. 647. 650, 658, 660.

12. And there are three things which incline me to think that these words must have respect to some such special case as this I have mentioned, besides that this is very suitable to the Scope and Coherence of his Discourse in this place it self. 1. Because he doth in (*m*) another place of this Oration perswade to the Baptizing Children, even those who are Infants, νήπιόν ἐστι, &c. and that they should be sanctified while they are Babes, ἐν βρέφεσι, and this he recommends to be done before any evil be imbraced, as being greatly useful for the future life of the Child. 2. In the

(*m*) p. 448.

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ſame Oration, he declares his judgement, that even Infants dying without Baptiſm, (*n*) ſhould not be admitted to future glory, though they would be free from future puniſhment. And therefore it cannot be ſuppoſed, that he would adviſe that to be ordinarily done, which might run a needleſs hazard of the loſs of future glory to Infants, in that caſe where they were certainly qualified for the receiving Baptiſm, and being benefitted by it, as the Infants of Believing and Baptized Parents were. But in ſuch a caſe as that abovementioned, where there might be doubtfulneſs concerning ſuch Infants being in a capacity to receive Baptiſm, he might account that advice he gave, to be proper and uſeful. 3. Becauſe the Chriſtian Church did generally admit thoſe who were in the very entrance of their infancy, unto Baptiſm, and it cannot well be imagined that ſo peaceable a man as *Gregory Nazianzen* was, would adviſe againſt the general practice of the Chriſtian Church in ordinary caſes; while yet he profeſſedly allowed the lawfulneſs and uſefulneſs of that practice.

(*n*) p. 453.

13. *Tertullian* adviſeth the deferring (*o*) the Baptiſm of Infants till themſelves be inſtructed. But this place alſo may I ſuppoſe have a good account given of it, by conſidering the ſtate and diſcipline of the Primitive Church. And therefore, 1. *Pamelius* thinketh, (*p*) that this might probably be ſpoken concerning ſuch Infants, whoſe Parents were Infidels; but I had rather underſtand this alſo concerning thoſe whoſe Parents were profeſſed Chriſtians, but not yet Baptized. 2. *Tertullian*, (*q*) both in this very Book and elſewhere*, aſſerts that Baptiſm is neceſſary to ſalvation, and the priviledges of Chriſtianity, and to that purpoſe he applys to Baptiſm, as other ancient Writers generally did, thoſe words of Chriſt, *Except a man be born of water and of the ſpirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.* And therefore he plainly aſſerts, *Nemini ſine Baptiſmo competere ſalutem.* And this ſhews, that the advice of deferring Baptiſm, in perſons fitly diſpoſed to receive it, and further than the juſt rules of trial fixed in the ancient Church did require,

(*o*) Tertul. de Bapt. c. 18.

(*p*) In Tertul. de Bapt. n. 126.

(*q*) c. 12, 13. * & de Anima c. 39, 40.

require, was unreasonable and dangerous. And this may incline us to think that he intended not to plead for any other procraſtinating Baptiſm, (ſo far as his words can be fairly reconciled to this ſenſe). And he ſeems plainly enough to ſpeak his judgment, that the Infants of (r) Chriſtian Parents were fitly qualified for Baptiſm. 3. He adviſeth alſo grown perſons to defer their Baptiſm, and particularly Virgins (ſ) and Widows, till they either Marry, or were of tried and confirmed conſtancy. But all this ſeems to require the careful obſervance of that which the Primitive rules of order eſtabliſhed; that all thoſe who were born *Gentiles*, and were by Baptiſm to be ſolemnly entred into the Chriſtian profeſſion, muſt firſt give evidence by due and ſufficient trial, both to themſelves and to the Church alſo, that they were ſtedfaſtly reſolved to be conſtant and ſerious practiſers of the holy rules of the Chriſtian life. And till they had done this, he perſwades them not to put themſelves over forwardly upon Baptiſm, leſt they ſhould deceive themſelves and the Church too by failing in their practice; for as he ſaith here, (t) *omnis petitio & decipere poteſt & decipi*

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(r) de Anima ubi ſup.

(ſ) de Bapt. c. 18.

(t) ibid.

14. If any perſon will contend that *Tertullian* intended to perſwade to a more general delay of Baptiſm, than what this fair account of his words doth admit; he muſt acknowledge alſo, that he adviſeth this forbearance as well in the caſe of the adult, as of Infants. But though the very long deferring of Baptiſm was practiſed by ſeveral perſons, it was generally diſliked, by all the wiſeſt and beſt men in the Chriſtian Church. Hence the particular Fathers ſet themſelves vigorouſly to reprove and diſſwade this practice, which was undertaken by ſeveral perſons upon different accounts, inſomuch that many choſe to defer their Baptiſm until they had apprehenſions of approaching death, and then were Baptized in their Beds. But the ancient Church gave that publick teſtimony of its diſlike of this practice, in that ſuch Clinicks if they recovered, were adjudged unworthy to be admitted into any Office in the

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(*u*) Conc. Neoc. c. 12.
(*x*) Eus. Hist. L. 6. c. 43.

Ministry not only by the (*u*) Council of *Neocæsarea*, but by earlier rules of more ancient observation which were urged by (*x*) *Cornelius* against *Novatus*. And if *Tertullians* words should be construed (as I think they need not be) to perswade what the Church so generally disallowed, this would only speak him to err, but would be far from giving any allowance to this practice. And thus having now considered the custom of the ancient Church, for the Baptizing Infants, we have from thence in complyance with the Scripture, a further confirmation thereof, and a sufficient evidence that the Primitive Church were not, nor durst be so uncharitable to Infants as to debar them of Baptism.

15. *Thirdly*, *Anabaptism* so far as it throughly prevails, must utterly rend the peace and unity of the Church, and renounce the Communion thereof, and therefore is deeply Schismatical and unpeaceable. For they who assert those not to be owned right members of the Church who were Baptized in their infancy, unless they be Baptized again, do and must maintain that those Churches can be no true Churches of Christ, whose members were Baptized only in their infancy, and thereupon pass that heavy and unjust Censure upon the generality of all Christian Churches since the time of the first founding them, that they are no true Churches. Hence they are put upon rejecting the Communion of the true Catholick Christian Church, and the setting up for new Churches, in an high opposition to Charity and Unity, and in an open and avowed practice of Universal Schism. To this purpose, *Bullinger*, *Calvin*, *Zanchy*, *Beza*, and other Protestant Writers have complained greatly of *Anabaptists*, as laying a foundation of all disorder and confusion. Indeed they described those *Anabaptists* they wrote of, not only to hold this erroneous Opinion concerning Baptism it self, but to be Enthusiasts, and undervalue the Holy Scriptures; to ingage in such *Libertinism*, as to disallow the just authority

ty of Magistrates, and the setled Government of the Church; to imbrace the Principles of *Antinomianism*, with practices suitable thereto, with other hurtful errors: hence the *Anabaptists* were by (*y*) *Ursin* called a Sect, *quæ sine dubio à Diabolo est excitata, & monstrum est execrabile, ex variis hæresibus & blasphemiis conflatum*: which (saith he) *without doubt was raised by the Devil, and is an execrable Monster made up of various Heresies and Blasphemies.* But this Principle of theirs concerning Baptism is such, that thereby they cut themselves off from the Church or Body of Christ, and its Communion, and involve themselves in a very heavy sin, and dangerous condition.

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(*y*) Explic. Catech. Par. 2. Qu. 74.

16. And whatsoever may have any usefulness towards piety and goodness, which any of these men may seem to aim at in a way of error, and with a various mixture of other things hurtful and evil; is provided for by us (if good rules be carefully practised) in a better manner, and in a way of truth. That every man ought to make Religion his own act, and make a free and voluntary profession thereof, and yield his hearty consent to ingage himself therein, and in the practice thereof, we assert to be very necessary in persons who are of age and capacity of understanding. And though Infants cannot do this in their infant state; yet their future obligation is then declared on their behalf, and when they come to a sufficient age, they are certainly bound to believe and to do what in their Baptism was promised and declared in their names. And this is afterwards solemnly promised by themselves, when in their younger years they are confirmed, and they likewise in a sacred manner ingage themselves hereto, when at a fuller age they receive the holy Communion: and it would be of great advantage to the Church of God, and the holy exercises of piety, if these two offices were more generally, seriously and devoutly attended upon. Men also oblige themselves to the faith and duties of Religion, by their whole profession of Christianity, and all those acts whereby they own and declare themselves Christi-

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ans; and particularly in joining in all duties of Chriſtian Worſhip, and profeſſing the Creed or Chriſtian Faith: and the performance of what is thus undertaken, runs through the whole practice of the Chriſtian life. The reſult of what I have ſaid concerning *Anabaptiſm* is, that the miſcarriages therein contained, are of a very great and weighty nature; it being no ſmall evil and ſin, to offend greatly againſt the truth, and withal to confine and derogate from the grace of the Goſpel-Covenant, and the due extent of the Chriſtian Church, beſides the comfort and incouragement of Chriſtian Parents; and to be ſo injurious to Infants, as to deny them thoſe means of grace which they have a right to partake of, and which are uſeful to their Spiritual and eternal welfare, in neglecting alſo what God eſtabliſheth, and keeping off Infants from that ſolemn ingagement to God which he requireth; and to undermine the very foundations of Peace and Unity in the Church.

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Of Independents.

1. IN diſcourſing of *Independency*, and the Practices and Principles thereof, I ſhall not ſearch after all things that might be ſpoken to, ſince in ſeveral things the *Independents* or *Congregational Men* differ from one another, and alter their own Sentiments, and it was the profeſſion of thoſe five chief Perſons who eſpouſed this Cauſe in the time of our Civil Wars and Confuſions, (*a*) not to make their preſent judgments and practices, a binding Law to themſelves for the future. And therefore I ſhall conſider only ſome things which are mainly eſſential to the *Congregational*

(*a*) Apologet. Narration.

way,

way, and are the chief diſtinguiſhing Characters of that Party, and the things they mainly urge and contend for. And I ſhall ſhew that theſe things are ſo far from being deſirable or warrantable, that they are chargeable with much evil. And here I ſhall treat of three things. *Firſt*, Of ſingle Congregagations and the power thereof, not being ſubject to any Superiour Government in the Church. *Secondly*, Of their gathering Churches out of Chriſtian Churches by ſeparation, and modelling theſe by a particular Covenant with a private Congregation. *Thirdly*, Their placing the Governing Power and Authority of the Church in the People, or major Vote of the Members of their Church. Sect. IV.

2. *Firſt*, Their aſſerting ſingle Congregations not to be ſubject in matters of Eccleſiaſtical Order and Government, to any higher Authority among men, than what is exerciſed by themſelves. This is that Principle which denominates this party *Independents*. Indeed ſome of themſelves did at ſometimes expreſs their diſlike of this Name; and the Authors of the *Apologetical Narration* above mentioned, called it the proud and inſolent Title of *Independency*. But as this Name is ordinarily owned by the *Congregational men*, as in the end of their Preface to their Declaration of their Faith at the *Savoy*, and very frequently elſewhere; ſo the *Anſwer* to the *Thirty two Queſtions* from *New England*, gives this account of it: (*b*) *We do confeſs the Church is not ſo Independent, but that it ought to depend on Chriſt: but for dependency on men or other Churches, or other ſubordination unto them in regard of Church-Government, or power, we know not of any ſuch appointed by Chriſt in his Word.* And this they ſpeak concerning a particular Congregation. And whilſt we aſſert that ſuch Congregations ought to be under the inſpection of Biſhops or Superiour Governours in the Church, and under the Authority of publickly eſtabliſhed Rules and Canons of the Church, and under the Government alſo of Princes and Secular Sanctions:

(*b*) Anſwer to 14. Qu.

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ons: they of this way own no ſuch higher Governing Power and Authority, above that of a ſingle Congregation.

3. Concerning the Civil Magiſtrate, they declare him bound (*c*) to promote and protect the profeſſion of the Goſpel, and to take care that men of corrupt minds do not divulge Blaſphemies, and errors inevitably *deſtroying the ſouls of them that receive them.* But in other caſes, ſuch as *differences about the waies of the worſhip of God*, they ſay, *there is no warrant for the Magiſtrate under the Goſpel to abridge* Chriſtians *of their liberty.* And when the Declaration of Faith in the Congregational Churches was the ſame with that of the *Presbyterian* Aſſembly, except in ſuch things as they thought fit to alter: there were ſeveral things in the Chapters concerning *liberty of Conſcience*, and *the Civil Magiſtrate*; there were divers expreſſions relating to the power of Secular Rulers in matters of Religion, which they expunged. Among others this was one, (*d*) *It is his* (the Magiſtrates) *duty to take order that Unity and Peace be preſerved in the Church* ——— *and all corruptions or abuſes in Worſhip and Diſcipline prevented or reformed, and all the Ordinances of God duly ſetled, adminiſtred and obſerved.* And theſe things give intimations of diſliking any Uform eſtabliſhment of a ſetled Order in the Church, confirmed and fixed by the Sanctions of the Secular Authority as a ſtanding Rule, to which the Members of the Church ſhould conform themſelves. And one of their chief Writers hath declared himſelf againſt this with more than ordinary fierceneſs, much exceeding the bounds of Chriſtian ſobriety (which I think is but a mild expreſſion for ſuch violent words) as if this were a grand part of *Antichriſtianiſm.* He ſays, (*e*) *thoſe who by ways of force, would drive Chriſtians into any other Union or agreement, than their own light and duty will lead them into, do what in them lies to oppoſe the whole deſign of the Lord Chriſt towards them, and his rule over them.* Now to call the enacting any Uniform rules of Order, and the eſtabliſhing them under any Penalties, the *oppoſing the whole deſign of Chriſt*, and not only ſo, but the doing

(*c*) Decl. of Faith. c. 24. n. 3.

(*d*) Aſſemb. Confeſ. c. 23. n. 4.

(*e*) Dr. O. Of Evang. Love. c. 3. p. 43.

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doing it *as much as in them lies*, as if this were equal to the perſecutions of the Chriſtian Name by the moſt furious of the Pagan Emperours, is an expreſſion which will eaſily appear to ſpeak great paſſion, but litle or no conſideration.

4. And not long after we are told among other things, that for Chriſtians (*f*) *by external force to coerce or puniſh* thoſe who differ from them upon account of *various apprehenſions* relating to the Worſhip of God, or of *any Schiſms and diviſions* enſuing thereon, is *as foreign to the Goſpel, as to believe in* Mahomet, *and not in Jeſus Chriſt*. And now whither are we come? and what do we hear or read? that the care of Governours, and the uſe of their Authority to maintain the peace and Union of the Church, and the due order of Divine Worſhip and Service, ſhould be made to be parallel to the renouncing Chriſtianity, and imbracing Enthuſiaſm? Surely this is ſuch a ſpeaking evil of Dignities, and even for their pious care and zeal, as *Michael* the *Archangel* durſt not have undertaken. But as all pious Princes under the Old Teſtament, took care of the due order and eſtabliſhment of Religion by their Authority: and when the people did amiſs as to worſhip in high-places, or were guilty of other miſcarriages in Religion, this is in the Scripture charged as a fault upon the Prince: and they were commended when they kept up a right method of Religion, and particularly when they pulled down the *high places*. I ſuppoſe it may be ſaid by ſome, that theſe *high places* were prohibited by the Divine Law: but they ought alſo to conſider (beſides what might be otherwiſe ſaid) that Schiſms and Diviſions are alſo plainly prohibited by the commands of God: and the worſhipping in *high places* was a ſort of Schiſm. And under the New Teſtament, the power and duty of Rulers, is declared to be for the *puniſhing evil-doers, and the praiſe of them that do well*. If therefore the diſobeying the Divine precepts in a caſe where piety and charity thereby becomes neglected, the intereſt of Religion weakened, its friends grieved, its enemies incouraged,

(*f*) Ibid. p. 44, 45.

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couraged, peace undermined, and the glory of God hindred, all which are contained in unwarrantable Schiſms and Diviſions: I ſay if this be evil-doing, the Secular Ruler is not only warranted by the Chriſtian Doctrine, but is obliged in duty to God, duly to indeavour by his power to put a check thereto. And this is that which the moſt pious Princes have been ſenſible of, and careful to perform, as appears by many Imperial Conſtitutions and practices, and the Laws of other Kingdoms.

5. But it is more particularly aſſerted by thoſe of the *Congregational way*, that a particular Congregation hath by the Inſtitution of Chriſt ſuch a power within it ſelf, that there is no other Eccleſiaſtical Authority, whether of any more extenſive part of the Church, or of any Synods, or of any other Superior Eccleſiaſtical Governour, which hath any Eccleſiaſtical Juriſdiction over ſuch a Congregation, or the members thereof. To this purpoſe they in *New England* declared, (*g*) *We do not know any viſible Church of the New Teſtament properly ſo called, but only a particular Congregation.* And they who met in the Aſſembly at the *Savoy* declared, (*h*) *beſides theſe particular Churches, there is not inſtituted by Chriſt any Church more extenſive or Catholick, intruſted with power for the adminiſtration of his Ordinances, or the executing any Authority in his name.* And herein this more general Aſſembly ſeem not to allow ſo much, as ſome of them had before granted, that againſt an offending Church perſiſting in its miſcarriages, (*i*) *the Churches offended may and ought to pronounce the heavy Sentence of renouncing all Chriſtian Communion with them until they repent.* And concerning Synods, (and conſequently the Canons of Councils) we are told that (*k*) *in Caſes of difficulty and difference*, they allow *Synods to conſider and give advice*; but they *are not intruſted with any Church-power properly ſo called; or with any Juriſdiction over the Churches themſelves, to exerciſe any Cenſures, either over any Churches or perſons, or to impoſe their determinations on the Churches or Officers.* And they of *New England* particularly

(*g*) Anſw. to Q. 3.

(*h*) Of the Inſtit. of Churches, n. 6.

(*i*) Apolog. Narrat.

(*k*) Of the Inſt. of Ch. n. 26.

ly denying any ſuch Authority to Synods or Councils, declare that (*o*) Church Cenſures of *Excommunication, or the like, belong to the particular Church of which an Offender is member, out of the Communion whereof a man cannot be caſt, but only by his own Church.* Now from all this it is manifeſt, that this is a great Principle of *Independency*, that every particular Congregation, and all the members thereof, are exempt from all Superior Eccleſiaſtical Jurisdiction, nor is there any higher Church-Authority appointed by Chriſt, to which they ought to be ſubject, beſides that of this particular Congregation.

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(*o*) Anſw. to Qu. 18.

6. But *Firſt*, This is contrary to what the Holy Scriptures declare, and all the ancient Churches of God, agreeably thereto, have practiſed concerning the right order and Government of the Church. What is more evident in the Scriptures than that the ſeveral Churches of Chriſtians were under the Authority and Government of the Apoſtles themſelves; which is ſufficient to manifeſt, that it was no Inſtitution nor intendment of Chriſt, that particular Churches ſhould not be ſubject to any Superior Eccleſiaſtical Authority. Nor was ſuch Governing Authority peculiar to the Apoſtles themſelves, but was by them thought requiſite to be committed to the care of others. Hence for inſtance, *Titus* was in *Crete*, appointed by Saint *Paul, to ordain Elders in every City, and to ſet in order the things which were wanting*, Tit. 1. 5. and other expreſſions of his Governing or Epiſcopal power, are contained in divers expreſſions of that Epiſtle. But it muſt be a ſtrange ſtrength of imagination that can inable any man to conceive, that when *Crete* was a Country almoſt three hundred miles in length, and ſo greatly peopled, that it was very anciently called *Hecatompolis*, as having a hundred great places or Cities within its Territories, and *Titus was to ordain Elders in every City*; yet all theſe ſhould make up but one particular Congregation, unto which the power of *Titus* ſhould be confined.

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7. And concerning the Authority of Councils, it is manifeſt, that upon occaſion of ſome *Judaizing* Teachers diſturbing the Chriſtian Church at *Antioch*, the Council at *Jeruſalem*, Act. 15. met together and gave their authoritative deciſion concerning Circumciſion and other *Jewiſh* Rites, not to be impoſed on the *Gentile* Chriſtians, any further than they particularly injoined. This may well be called a General Council, ſince it not only pronounced a deciſive determination concerning the Univerſal Church, expreſſing what the *Gentiles* were not to admit, or were obliged to practiſe, and on what terms the *Jews* were bound to admit, and not ſcruple Communion with the *Gentiles*; but alſo had in it ſuch perſons, who being Apoſtles, had an undoubted univerſal Authority over the whole Church. And whereas the deciſion of the Apoſtles themſelves alone, and their Authority had been of it ſelf abundantly ſufficient to lay an obligation upon the Chriſtian Church in that particular caſe, the Apoſtles notwithſtanding this, took in with them the Elders of the Church to debate, and conſider of this matter, *Act.* 15. 6. which is a ſufficient evidence that the Apoſtles did allow ſuch Elders or Church-Officers, as they eſtabliſhed in the Church, to have a power in Councils, to order and determine what related to the affairs of the Church by Synodical Authority: for otherwiſe the Apoſtles would never have joyned them with themſelves to this purpoſe.

8. And S. *Paul* was ſo forward and zealous to require a general obedience to the deciſion of this Council, that in his Miniſtry he delivered to the Cities where he preached, the decrees for to keep, *which were ordained of the Apoſtles and Elders which were at Jeruſalem*, Act. 16. 4. And here that expreſſion of his, delivering theſe Decrees as not only ordained of the Apoſtles, but of the Apoſtles and Elders alſo, deſerves to be conſidered, as thereby laying a more clear and manifeſt foundation for the Authority of future Synods and Councils of the Officers and Biſhops of the Chriſtian

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Christian Church. And it may be further observed, that case in which S. *Paul* rebuked S. *Peter*, *Gal.* 2. was his not acting according to the rules of this Council, and a complying further with the *Jewish* Rites, and the favourers of the Circumcision, than was here determined; and not being ready to own that liberty of the *Gentile* Church which was contained in this Synodical decision.

9. And consonant hereunto, the ancient Christian Churches did all along greatly reverence the authoritative decision of Catholick Councils and Synods, the Canons of which are so well known to all men of ordinary reading, that he must be a man greatly ignorant of Ecclesiastical affairs, who knows nothing of them. And in several General and Provincial Councils, and in those Canons particularly taken into that ancient Code, called the Canons of the Apostles, or into the Codes of the Universal Church, of the *Western* Church, or the *African* Church; many things were established by them for the peace, unity and order of the Church, and especially for the promoting purity therein; and the degrees of the punishment by suspension, deposition, excommunication, and the continuance thereof upon the offenders, are there plainly determined to be a Rule for the several Churches to act by. And in these ancient Councils, when there was great occasion for such heavy sentences, the most eminent Officers, or the Bishops of those most renowned places in the Christian Church, were deposed, or excommunicated by their Synodical Authority, and not by their own particular Church. Thus was *Paulus Samosatenus* Bishop of *Antioch*, deposed by the Council at *Antioch*, *Nestorius* Bishop of *Constantinople*, by the General Council of *Ephesus*, and *Dioscorus* Bishop of *Alexandria*, by the General Council of *Chalcedon*; to which multitudes of other instances may be given. And in particular Churches the great and eminent authority fixed in Bishops, though the Canons allowed but one Bishop in the greatest City with its precincts, is sufficient to shew that the particular Congregations in that City had

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no ſuch Independency of power and Government. So that this branch of *Independency* oppoſeth the Apoſtolical order, and the conſtant practice and ſenſe of all primitive Chriſtian Churches from the Apoſtles.

10. *Secondly*, This notion of *Independency*, lays a foundation for perpetual confuſion and diviſion in the Church, and ſubverts the precepts for Chriſtian Unity. For according to this Principle, ſo far as concerns power and authority, any company of men may ſet up for themſelves apart, and multiply Sects and diſtinct Communions: and none having any Superior Government over them, theſe parties and diviſions may be perpetuated and ſubdivided to the ſcandal and Reproach of Chriſtianity, and no way left for any authority in the Chriſtian Church to check and redreſs them. So that this notion is perfectly fitted to ſerve the intereſt of Schiſm and diſcord, and to heighten and increaſe, but is as fully oppoſite to the Unity and honour of the Chriſtian Religion. For if we ſhould admit for the preſent the ſcanty and imperfect notion of Schiſm, which Dr. *O.* (*p*) hath framed, that it is needleſs diviſions of judgement and diſcord in a particular Congregation, when departing from it is no Schiſm, if the guilty party ſhould ſo far unchriſtianly foment ſuch diſcords, as to deſerve the cenſure of that Church; and ſhall withal proceed ſo far, as openly to ſeparate and depart from it; they have by this means according to this notion, after a ſtrange and admirable manner, ſet themſelves free, and clear both from ſin and cenſure. For when they have thus openly ſeparated from their former Communion, they themſelves become a diſtinct particular Congregation, and thereby are under no Superior Eccleſiaſtical Juriſdiction, nor can they be authoritatively cenſured by any: and by this open ſeparation, they according to this principle, are become a particular diſtinct Church, and the Schiſm is healed; and by being parted into two diſtinct Societies, there remains no longer any ſuch diviſion as there was before in one Congregation, which is Schiſm; but by going

(*p*) Review of Sch. againſt Mr. *Cawdr.* c. 8, 9.

going further asunder, and separating from one another, they are in a wonderful manner brought to Unity in two opposite Congregations. And thus by the late rare inventions of men, which have been unknown to all former times, the rending things asunder, and breaking them in pieces, are the new found methods to make them one. But such a way of Unity, if it can please some singular fancies, will appear monstrous to the generality of mankind. Sect. IV.

11. That these notions and practices are great promoters of discord and division, is not a bare speculation, but hath been manifested by sufficient experience. In *Amsterdam* the separate Communion of the Societies of Mr. *Johnson* and Mr. *Ainsworth* under *Brownism*; and in *Rotterdam*, the like of those of Mr. *Bridge*, and Mr. *Simpson*, proceeded upon this principle. And this very principle of *Independency*, helped many forward in this Kingdom in our late times of discord, to set up new parties of *Anabaptists*, *Seekers*, and other Sects, many of which were the off-sets of fermented *Independency*, and its adulterine off-spring. And the sad and lamentable relation of the *Bermudas Islands*, called the *Summer Islands*, is also very considerable, where after this *Congregational way* was there undertaken, the rejected part are said to have neglected all care of Religion, and the gathered or separated part, to have run on in dividing, till they in a manner lost their Christian Religion in *Quakerism*. And thus many have made a further improvement, than the asserters themselves allowed, of the allowed liberty for them who (*q*) are in Church-fellowship, (as they call their way) to depart from the Communion of the Church where they have walked, to join themselves with some other Church, where they may injoy the Ordinances in the purity of the same.

(*q*) Instit. o Chur. n. 28.

12. Wherefore this notion of *Independency* would misrepresent the Christian Society, and the Institution of Christ, as if whilst Unity was earnestly injoyned therein, the state of this Society should be left without that Order and Government,

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ment, which is necessary to preserve it. For under this model the Church would be as far from an orderly and regular state; as an Army would be when every several Troop or Company were left wholly to themselves, and their own pleasure, allowing some respect to be had to the conduct of their own Captain and inferiour Officers, but not owning any Authority of any General, or higher Commander than what is in their own Troop. Or it might be somewhat resembled by the state of such an imaginary Kingdom, where every Village in the Country, and every Parish in a City, should have such a chief power within themselves; that there should be no appeal for justice to any higher Court, nor any other power to punish them, but what is executed by themselves. If such things as these were put in practice, they would not only hinder the serviceableness and usefulness of such an Army or Kingdom, (if it could be allowed to call them so) but here would be also wanting the beauty and comeliness of Unity and Order, and a door opened to frequent discords and dissentions.

13. *Secondly*, I shall consider their gathering Churches (as they call them) out of those who were Christian members of the Church of Christ, and entring them into their Societies, by a particular Covenant made to and with a private Congregation, and pretending this Covenant to be the main ground, and true way of the establishment and Union of a Church. The value they set upon this Covenant, may appear from the declaration of the Churches in *New England*, who say, (r) *First, That this is that whereby a company of Christians do become a Church: it is the Constitutive form of a Church. Secondly, This is that, by taking hold whereof a particular person becomes a member of a Church.* And though they frequently speak so fairly to such Christian Churches as do not admit this special Covenant with a single Congregation only, as to declare their owning them to be true Churches; yet all this cannot well be reconciled with

(r) Apol. for Ch. Cov. p. 5.

with this principle. And therefore those of this way in *England*, at their publick meeting, speak more openly and more consistently with their own notion, when they declared (*s*) every Society assembling for the celebration of the Ordinances according to the appointment of Christ, within any civil Precincts and Bounds, is not thereby constituted a Church ——— and therefore a Believer living with others in such a precinct, may join himself with any Church for his edification. But since this in truth is a separating members from that which really is a true part of the Christian Church, the *Presbyterians* truly declared that (*t*) *gathering Churches out of Churches, hath no footsteps in Scripture, is contrary to Apostolical practice, is the scattering of Churches, the Daughter of Schism, the Mother of Confusion, but the Step-mother to Edification.* But I must acknowledge, that the present practices of this party also, looks as if they had now laid aside this opinion.

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(*s*) Of Instit. of Churches, n. 23.

(*t*) Pref. to Jus div. Regim. Eccles.

14. But this *Congregational* method doth suppose, that Baptized Christians are not obliged by any Church-relation they are already in, to Communicate with any particular Church, or part of the Christian Church; when the natural consequence of the Unity of the Christian Church, will be to lay an obligation upon all its members, to Communicate with that regular part thereof, within whose Precincts they reside. And this new notion gives a larger discharge to multitudes of Christians from the duties of Communion, than the rules of Religion will allow, until they shall enter into such a particular Covenant, which is not only unnecessary, but unwarrantable also, as will hereafter appear. And there seemed too much reason for that complaint of the *Presbyterians*, by the Provincial Assembly (as they stiled themselves) that *the removing the Parochial Bounds, would open a gap to thousands of people, to live like Sheep without a Shepherd, and instead of joining with purer Churches, to join with no Churches, and in a little time* (*as we conceive*, say they, adding in the Margent, *as our experience abundantly shews*) *it would bring in all manner of profaneness*

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and Atheism. And whilst they unwarrantably declare, the fixed state of our Church to be such, that Christians are not obliged to hold Communion therewith, and thereupon both themselves depart from it, and teach others to do the like; it deserves to be more seriously considered by them, than hitherto it hath been, how this dividing, principle and practice can be justified before Christ himself. For if Christ will say to them who neglect to express kindness and respect to the rest of his members, *In as much as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me*, Matt. 25. 45. May not they fear lest they hear the same, who rashly and unjustly cast contempt, reproach and disrespect, upon that Church which he owneth as his; and disown, and reject its Communion?

15. But this which they call gathering of Churches, by taking to themselves those who either were, or ought to have been under other Guides and Governours of the Church, in a different, but more justifiable way and order, is indeed a making divisions in a setled Church, and separations from it. And this practce of division and separation, is so greatly displeasing to the Holy Spirit of God, that there are many earnest and vehement expressions in the Holy Scriptures against it. To which purpose the Apostle beseecheth the *Romans, to mark them who cause divisions and offences contrary to the Doctrine they had received, and avoid them*, Rom. 16. 17. *even them who by good words and fair speeches, deceived the hearts of the simple.* Against such separations the ancient and Primitive Christians were very zealous (as I have noted in (*u*) another place) and so are also the generality of the Protestant Writers.

(*u*) Libert. Eccles. B. 1. C. 1. Sect. 3.

16. Such a way of separation, which in the phrase and language of the ancient Christians, was expressed by a *Presbyter*, contemning his own Bishop, and having a separate Congregation, and erecting another Altar (or different Communion, as to Sacramental administrations) was severely censured in those early times of Christianity. In that most ancient (*x*) collection of Canons, such a *Presbyter*,

(*x*) Can. Ap. 31.

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byter, and as many of the Clergy as joined with him, were ſentenced to be depoſed, and the Laity to be Excommunicated after admonition. The Code of Canons of the Univerſal Church, further determine concerning a *Presbyter* or *Deacon*, who ſhall thus ſeparate, (*y*) that his *depoſition* ſhall be without any way of return to his former *honour* and dignity in the Church; and that if he perſiſt in diſturbing the Church, he ſhould be reduced by the Secular Power, as being ſeditious. And the *African* Code in this caſe declare, (*z*) that ſuch a *Presbyter* ſhould be ejected from his place, and that he ſhould be anathematized; and the inflicting this double puniſhment, which was not uſual in the Church for a ſingle crime, ſhews of how heinous a nature this offence was then accounted, when the Primitive rules of diſcipline were received.

(*y*) Cod. Can. Eccl. Univ. c. 85.

(*z*) Cod. Eccl. Afr. c. 10, 11.

17. Amongſt ſuch Proteſtant Writers as are moſt in eſteem with our Diſſenters, *Calvin* aſſerts it to be certain (*a*) that this ſtone is continually moved by the Devil, that he might break the Unity of the Church: and he purpoſely oppoſeth, and ſmartly condemneth (*b*) all ſeparation from a true Church, where the Holy Sacraments are duly adminiſtred, and the true rule of Religion is imbraced. The (*c*) *Leyden* Profeſſors, account the erecting ſeparate Aſſemblies, in the breach of Communion, by them who hold the foundation of the Faith, and agree with the Church therein, upon occaſion of external indifferent Rites, or particular miſcarriages in manners, to be properly Schiſmatical, and that this is one of the works of the fleſh, and renders a Society impure, and that it is not lawful to hold Communion with ſuch a Schiſmatical Church; to which purpoſe they urge many Texts of Scripture. And *Zanchy* treating largely hereof, doth (*d*) particularly undertake to maintain, that though there be ſome *diverſity of Doctrine*, but in things not fundamental; though different ways of *Rites and Ceremonies*; though there be vices in *Miniſters*, or corruptions in *people*; or

(*a*) Calv. in 1 Cor. 11. 9.

(*b*) Inſt. l. 4. c. 1. & in Pſ. 26. 5.

(*c*) Synopſ. pur. Theol. Diſp. 40. n. 37, 41, 42.

(*d*) Zanch. Miſcel. de Eccleſ. c. 7.

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want of due care in *rejecting offenders* from the Communion; he that shall separate from a true Church upon these pretences, shall not, saith he, escape the wrath of God, and *ira Dei manet super illum*, the wrath of God abides upon that person.

18. How far such separations from our Church, are made use of by the *Romanists* to serve their interest, might be shewed of many of their Authors. But I shall content my self here to observe what was noted by one of our own (*e*) learned Historians Mr. *Camden*, concerning the time of Queen *Elizabeth*. That when in her Reign, some of the Ministry in dislike of the Liturgy, Order and Government of the Church, *templa adire recusarent, & plane schisma facerent, did refuse to come to our publick Worship, and manifestly made a Schism*, this was done *Pontificiis plaudentibus, multosque in suas partes pertrahentibus, quasi nulla esset in Ecclesia Anglicana Unitas; the Papists rejoicing at it, and drawing away many to their party, as if there were no Unity in the Church of* England.

(*e*) Camd. Annal. Eliz. an. 1583.

19. I shall now examine their particular Covenant whereby they ingage themselves to walk together as constant members of that particular Society, or Congregation to which they join themselves. Now this Covenant in a way of separation, is no other but a bond of division, and was to that purpose invented by the *Brownists*. And that it was their practice, is (*f*) acknowledged by the Churches in *New England*. Against which, such things as these may be justly alledged: 1. That this contradicts another of their avowed Positions, *That nothing not instituted of Christ, ought to be received or submitted to as terms of Communion with a Church*; and some of them more largely declare, that (*g*) *particular Churches have no power to make Laws for themselves or their members, but to observe the Laws of Christ: and if any Church presume further, they go beyond their Commission* ——— *and it would be sin to be subject to such Laws.* But such a particular contract with a single Congregation, especi-

(*f*) Apol. for Ch. Cov. p. 41, 42, 43, 44.

(*g*) Answer to 32. Qu. qu. 28.

especially a separating one, was never any part of Christs Institution. But because this other opinion of theirs is also erroneous, it is of greater concernment to observe, that this way of Covenanting, is opposite to the Institution of Christ, in that by division and separation, it breaks the Unity of the Christian Church, which Christ hath established to be one Church, and one Body. But the dividing the Church into several *Independent* Societies, which is contrary to what the Institution of Christ appointeth, is so much designed by this Covenant, that some of themselves tell us, (*h*) without this kind of Covenanting, we know not how it would be avoided, but all Churches would be confounded into one. Now this is as much as to say, that Christ and his Apostles, who appointed not this kind of Covenanting, established the Christian Church in that way of Unity, that it was one Church, but these have ordered this method for the dividing it.

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(*f*) ibid. Answ. to Qu. 8.

20. *Secondly*, This casts a disparagement on Christs Institution of Baptism, as if this Ordinance of his was not sufficient and effectual for the purposes to which he appointed it, whereof one was the receiving Members into his Church, and the Communion thereof. The Scriptures declare Christians to be *Baptized into one Body*, 1 Cor. 12. 12. *and that they who are Baptized into Christ, have put on Christ*, Gal. 3. 27. and therefore by this Sacramental Ordinance, members are received into fellowship with Christ, and communion with his Church. But these expressions in the Assembly-confession of (*i*) *Sacraments being Instituted* —— *to put a visible difference between those that belong unto the Church, and the rest of the World.* And *of Baptism being ordained by Christ, for the solemn admission of the party Baptized into the visible Church, are rejected*, and left out in the declaration of Faith, by them of the *Congregational way*. And we are told by the *New England Independents*, that (*k*) *they do not believe that Baptism doth make men members*

(*i*) Conf. c. 27. n. 1.

(*k*) Answ. to 32. Qu. to qu. 4.

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bers of the Church; and they there ſay ſtrangely enough, that *Chriſt Baptized, but made no new Church.* Wherefore when Chriſt appointed Baptiſm, to receive members of his Church, this Covenant which he never appointed, is by them ſet up thus far in the place and room of it.

21. *Thirdly*, By making this Covenant, the only right ground of Church-fellowſhip, they caſt a high reflexion on the Apoſtolical and Primitive Churches, who neither practiſed nor delivered any ſuch thing: as if the Apoſtolical Model muſt give place to theirs, and thoſe firſt Churches muſt not be eſteemed regularly eſtabliſhed. But this Covenant managed in the dividing way, is ſomewhat like the practice of *Novatus*, who hath been ever reputed guilty of great Schiſm; who ingaged his followers by the moſt ſolemn Vow, that they ſhould never forſake him, nor return to *Cornelius* their true Biſhop: only his Covenant had not a peculiar reſpect to a particular Congregation. But this bond of their own promiſe and vow, was intended to keep them in that ſeparation, which the more ſolemn Vow of Baptiſm, and undertaking Chriſtianity, ingaged them to reject. And it is a great miſtake to imagine, that the former ought to take place againſt the latter; or that men may bind themſelves to act againſt the will of God, and that thenceforth they ought not to obſerve it.

22. *Fourthly*, The confinement of Church-membership to a ſingle Congregation, entred under ſuch a particular Covenant, is contrary to ſeveral plain duties of Chriſtianity. For according to this notion, the peculiar offices of Brotherly Love, as being members one of another, and that Chriſtian care that follows thereupon, it limited to a narrow compaſs (together with the exerciſe of the *Paſtoral care* alſo) which ought to be inlarged to all thoſe profeſſed Chriſti-

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Christians, with whom we do converse. And it is of dangerous and pernicious consequence, that the duties of love, and being helpful to one another, and provoking to love and good works, upon account of our membership with the Church visible, (though these things be in practice too much neglected) should be straitned by false and hurtful notions and opinions. It was none of the least miscarriages of the *Jews*, that when God gave them that great Commandment, *to love their Neighbour as themselves*; they should satisfie themselves in the performing this duty with a much more restrained sense of the word *Neighbour*, than the Divine Law intended. And it must not be conceived, that false imaginations concerning the bounds of the Church, and fellowship therein, will be esteemed in the sight of God, a sufficient discharge from the duties he requires men to perform to others: nor will this be a better excuse under Christianity, than the like mistake was under *Judaism*.

23. *Thirdly*, I shall consider their placing the chief Ecclesiastical power and authority in the Body of the people, or the members of the Church. To this purpose by some of them we are told, that (*m*) *in* Peter *and the rest, the Keys are committed to all Believers, who shall join together in the same confession, according to the Ordinance of Christ*; and they give the people the power of (*n*) censuring offenders, even Ministers themselves if they be such. And on this account, at least in part, I suppose the Congregational Churches in their Declaration of Faith, omitted the whole Chapter of (*o*) Church-censures contained in the Assembly's Confession, in which they had declared the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven to be committed to the Church Officers. Now besides that the way of Government and Censure by the major Vote of the people, hath been the occasion of much confusion in some of their Congregations; that which I shall particularly insist on, is the great-

(*m*) Answ. to 32. Qu. to Q. 14.

(*n*) Answ. to Qu. 15.

(*o*) Ch. 30.

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great ſin of intruding upon any part of the Miniſterial Authority, or neglecting due regard or reverence thereto. How plain is it in the Scripture, that the Apoſtles governed and ordered the ſtate of the Chriſtian Church, and that *Timothy* and *Titus*, and the Angels of the Churches did, and were to do the like. It was to the Apoſtles as chief Officers of the Chriſtian Church, that Chriſt declared, *Joh.* 20. 23. *whoſeſoever ſins ye remit, they are remitted, and whoſeſoever ſins ye retain, they are retained*; and *Matt.* 18. 18. *whatſoever ye ſhall bind on Earth, ſhall be bound in Heaven; and whatſoever ye ſhall looſe in Earth, ſhall be looſed in Heaven.* And by theſe, and ſuch like words, the power of inflicting Cenſures; and receiving to, and conferring of the priviledges of the Church; as well as of diſpenſing all thoſe Ordinances whereby the grace of God, and remiſſion of ſins are particularly tendered, are appropriated to the Officers of the Church as part of their Office.

24. In this plain ſenſe were theſe Chriſtian Laws generally underſtood by the Primitive Church, which practiſed accordingly, which they who read the ancient Canons muſt neceſſarily confeſs. And the ſame is manifeſt from the particular Writers of the firſt Ages. For inſtance, even (*p*) S. *Cyprian* from what our Lord ſpake to S. *Peter* of the power of the Keys, and of binding and looſing, infers the *Epiſcopal honour*, and that every act of the Church, muſt be governed by thoſe Prefects or Superiors. And from thoſe words, and what our Saviour ſpake to his Apoſtles, *Jo.* 20. about remitting ſins, he concludes, that only the Governours in the Church (*q*), can give remiſſion of ſins. And when *Rogatianus* a Biſhop complained to *Cyprian*, concerning a Deacon who behaved himſelf contumeliouſly towards him, S. *Cyprian* commends his humility in addreſſing himſelf to him, (*r*) when he had *himſelf power* by virtue of his *Epiſcopacy*, and the authority of his Chair, to avenge himſelf of him, and might be certain that what he ſhould have done by

(*p*) Cyp. Ep. 27.

(*q*) Ep. 73.

(*r*) Ep. 65.

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his ſacerdotal power, would be acceptable to all his *Colleagues*. In which words he plainly aſſerts the authority of inflicting an Eccleſiaſtical Cenſure even upon a Deacon to be wholly in the Biſhops power by virtue of his Office. And it is indeed no mean authority, which is committed by the Inſtitution of our Lord, to the Officers of the Chriſtian Church, who are appointed to be as Shepherds, ποιμαίνειν, *to feed and to rule his flock*, Joh. 21. 16. Act. 20. 28. 1 Pet. 5. 2.

25. Indeed they of the *Congregational way* do aſſert ſome ſpecial authority to the Paſtors and Teachers of their Congregations; and to them they particularly reſerve the adminiſtration of the Sacraments. They declare (*ſ*) that where there are no teaching Officers, none may adminiſter the Seals, nor can the Church authorize any ſo to do. But then they alſo place the power of making theſe Officers, and committing authority to them, in the people, and attribute very little to the power of Ordination. Indeed concerning a Paſtor, Teacher or Elder, they tell us, that (*t*) it is appointed by Chriſt, (but no ſuch appointment can be produced) he be choſen by the *common ſuffrage of the Church it ſelf, and ſolemnly ſet apart by faſting and prayer, with impoſition of hands of the Elderſhip of that Church, if there be any before conſtituted therein.* But if there be no Elderſhip in that Congregation (as there can be none in the firſt erecting any particular Congregational Church, and in the after appointing a Paſtor, it muſt be at leaſt of thoſe who are in inferiour Office) (*u*) they think it *neither lawful nor convenient*, to call in the aſſiſtance of the Miniſters of other Churches, by *way of authority*, when the Church is to ordain Officers. But this Poſition proceeds upon their dividing notion, in not owning the true Unity of the Catholick viſible Church, and thereupon they aſſert, that as to (*x*) *acts of authority and power in diſpenſing Gods Ordinance, a Miniſter cannot ſo perform any*

(*ſ*) Of Inſtit. of Churches, n. 16.

(*t*) Ibid. n. 11.

(*u*) Anſw. to Qu. 13.

(*x*) Anſw. of Eld in New Engl. to 9. Poſit. Poſ. the 8.

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ny Miniſterial act to any other Church but his own. But how little they eſteem that irregular way of impoſing hands, which themſelves ſpeak of as Chriſts Inſtitution, may appear from their declaring that a Paſtor, Teacher, or Elder choſen by the Church, (*y*) though not ſet apart by impoſition of hands, are rightly conſtituted Miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt. To the like purpoſe, the Elders of *New England* ſpeak; who alſo give power (*z*) to thoſe who are no Officers of the Church, to ordain Officers; and alſo judge, that a Miniſter Ordained in one Church, if he afterwards becomes a Miniſter in another Church, muſt receive a new Ordination. But ſurely thoſe who let looſe their fancies at ſuch a ſtrange rate, uſed no great conſideration of what they wrote.

(*y*) Inſt. of Ch. n. 12.

(*z*) Anſw. to Qu. 21.

26. And it greatly concerns the people, ſince they undertake to act in the name of Chriſt, in diſpenſing any part of the power of the Keys, as in inflicting Spiritual cenſures; and to exerciſe his authority in conſtituting Officers in his Church, by giving Office-power to them; that they be well aſſured, that they have ſufficient authority from him to warrant their proceedings: eſpecially ſince ſuch things as theſe are repreſented in the Holy Scripture, and have been ever eſteemed in the Ancient Church, as well as the Modern, to be peculiar acts of the Miniſterial power in the Chief Officers of the Church. And they whom they call Paſtors, or Teachers, but have no better authority than this to warrant them to be ſo, had alſo need to beware, how they undertake to diſpenſe the Chriſtian Myſteries, as Officers appointed in Chriſts name. For if they to whom God hath given no ſuch Commiſſion, preſume to ſet apart Officers in his name, and to impart to them his authority, this is like the act of *Micah* in conſecrating *Prieſts*, Judg. 17. 5, 12. or like *Jeroboams* Sacrilegious intruſion, in making thoſe to be Prieſts, who were

were not so according to the rules of Gods appointment, 1 *Kings* 12. 31. *chap.* 13. 33. which thing with its concomitants, was so highly offensive to God, that the very next words tell us, *vers.* 34. *this thing became a sin unto the house of Jeroboam, even to cut it off, and to destroy it from off the face of the earth.* Nor can it be thought a lesser affront to the Majesty of God, to set up chief Officers in his name, without his Commission; than it would be against the Majesty of a King, to erect Judicatures in his Kingdom, or to confer the great Offices of the Realm, and places of eminent Dignity and Trust, without any Authority from him, or from his Laws. Sect. IV.

27. And to exercise any proper Ministerial power in the name of God or Christ, without sufficient authority, is no small offence. The severe punishment of *Saul*'s Sacrificing, by the loss of his Kingdom, 1 *Sam.* 13. 13, 14. and of *Uzziah*'s offering Incense, by his being smitten with Leprosie, which rendered him uncapable not only of Governing the Kingdom, but of having society with the *Congregation of the Lord*, 2 Chron. 26, 19, 21. testifie how much God was provoked thereby. The dreadful Judgment upon *Corah* and his Company, for offering Incense, and pleading the right of all the Congregation of *Israel* against *Moses* and *Aaron*, as if they had taken too much upon them, was very remarkable. And much more is it sinful and dangerous to intrench upon the Office of the Gospel Ministry: because the Institution of Christ, the authority conveyed by him, and the grace conferred from him, are things more high and sacred, than what was delivered by *Moses*.

28. But the making and Ordaining Ministers in the Church, was both in the Scripture, and in all succession of antiquity, performed by those who had the chief authority of Office in or over the Christian Church; as particularly by Christ himself, his Apostles, and the succeeding

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ceeding Biſhops. Chriſt himſelf ſent his Apoſtles as his Father ſent him; and he, not his other Diſciples, gave them their Commiſſion. S. *Paul* and *Barnabas* where they came, *ordained Elders in every Church*, Act. 14. 23. and ſo muſt *Titus* do in every City of *Crete*, Tit. 1. 5. And when S. *Paul* ſent his directions to *Timothy*, concerning the due qualifications of thoſe who were to be *Biſhops* and *Deacons* in the Church, 1 *Tim.* 3. and wrote this for this end, that *Timothy might know how he ought to behave himſelf in the houſe of God*, v. 14, 15. this plainly ſhews, that he had the main care of appointing and admitting Officers in the Church of *Epheſus*.

29. In the Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory of the next ages, there is nothing more plain than that the Biſhops of the Chriſtian Church (who as (*a*) *Tertullian*, (*b*) *Irenæus*, and (*c*) others affirm, were made and appointed by the Apoſtles themſelves) did Ordain the ſeveral ſorts of Eccleſiaſtical Officers, Biſhops, Prieſts and Deacons. That the ancient Church did generally acknowledge, that a Biſhop was regularly to be Ordained by three Biſhops, (who muſt be of other Churches) may partly appear from the induſtrious care of (*d*) *Novatus*, (though very ill managed againſt peace, honeſty, and other rules of common morality, as *Cornelius* relates it) to ſend about to find three obſcure Biſhops, who might Ordain him in oppoſition to *Cornelius*. But this is more fully evident from the great conteſts concerning the validity of *Cecilians* Ordination, againſt which the *Donatiſts* earneſtly objected, as the main pretence for their Schiſm, that *Felix* one of the Ordainers of *Cecilian* was not a regular Biſhop, and therefore his Ordination was inſufficient, which caſe was canvaſed in *Africa*, *Italy*, *France*, and other places. So that that firſt Canon of the old Code, (*e*) that a Biſhop was to be Ordained by two or three Biſhops, was ſo far manifeſtly agreeable to the ancient practice and ſenſe of the Church, that they uſually inſiſted up-

(*a*) de Præſcrip. c. 32.
(*b*) adv. Hær. l. 3. c. 3.
(*c*) Euſ. Hiſt. l. 2. c. κγ'.
(*d*) ibid. l. 6. c. μγ'.
(*e*) Can. Ap. 1.

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on having the greater number of three in this Ordination. And so it was particularly expressed in the Canons of the first General Council, (*f*) which also requires the consent of the other Bishops of the Province, and particularly the (*g*) Metropolitan, which was included in the more ancient practice. And this may be sufficient to satisfie any man, that Ordination, and regular Ordination of the chief Officer in the Church, was, in the first Ages of Christianity, accounted greatly necessary; and that the Bishops of other Churches (there being but one Catholick Bishop of one Church) three at least must meet together to confer this Ordination. Much more might be added, if it were needful in so plain a case.

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(*f*) Conc. Nic. c. 4.

(*g*) ib. c. 6.

30. And whereas so great a stress is laid upon the election of the people, as if this were the great essential thing, which constituted any one in the Office of the Ministry; it is also manifest, that the choice of any person for the Ministry which was by way of recommendation of him to those who were to Ordain him, was sometimes done by the people, and sometimes by others. But there was no rule in the Scripture which requireth any necessity of the peoples election, nor was there ever any constant practice hereof, either in the time of the Holy Scriptures themselves, or in the next ages of the Primitive Church. When Christ chose his Apostles, he *called to him his Disciples*, and of them *he chose twelve, whom he named Apostles*, Luk 6. 13. but he did not appoint his other Disciples to chuse them. *James* who was made the first Bishop of *Jerusalem*, is related to have been chosen by the Apostles, (*h*) particularly by *Peter*, *James* and *John*. Many times the Holy Spirit guided the Ordainers to fix upon the particular person to be ordained. Thus *Timothy* was chosen by Prophecy, 1 *Tim.* 4 14. And the Spirit directed the other Prophets and Teachers, that they should *separate Saul and Barnabas for the work to which he had called them*, Act. 13. 2.

(*h*) Euseb. Hist. l. 2. c. 2.

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And (*i*) *Clemens Romanus* declares, that the Apoſtles appointed Biſhops and Deacons, proving them by the Spirit. And that the Spirit of God ſhould thus guide the Ordainers to chooſe perſons for the Miniſtry, rather than the other Believers and Diſciples, may be of uſe to acquaint men, that our Saviour never made the peoples choice either neceſſary, or the main thing eſſential to the Miniſtry. In ſome places the Preſbyters of the Church, were the perſons who elected their Biſhop: and this (*k*) S. *Hierome* ſaith, was the practice at *Alexandria*, from the time of *Mark* the *Evangeliſt*, unto *Heraclas* and *Dionyſius*. And ſince *Mark* died, whilſt many of the Apoſtles were alive, and ſeveral years before the Martyrdom of S. *Peter* and S. *Paul*; this alſo gives a fair evidence that popular elections, were no Inſtitution of Chriſt or his Apoſtles.

(*i*) Cl. Rom. Ep. ad. Cor. p. 54, 55.

(*k*) Hieron. ad Evag.

31. Sometimes even under the early ages of Chriſtianity, Biſhops were choſen by Councils of other Biſhops. And ſo was (*l*) *Domnus* choſen Biſhop of *Antioch*, by the Council which depoſed *Paulus* for Hereſie. And there are frequent inſtances of like nature. And after the Empire was Chriſtian, this election was ſometimes made by the Emperour himſelf; and thus was *Nectarius* choſen by *Theodoſius* at *Conſtantinople*, even whilſt a General Council was there ſitting, and had been deliberating about the choice of a Biſhop of *Jeruſalem*. Now the conſidering how variouſly ſuch elections or recommendations were made, is ſufficient to manifeſt, that the Apoſtolical and firſt Primitive Churches accounted no one particular way of election, to be the main thing eſſential to the Miniſtry. And the popular way hath the leaſt of all to plead on this account, that the various inconveniences of admitting that, were found ſo great, that this was forbidden to be practiſed by one of the ancient Canons which was received in the general Code. And the reſult of all this is, That the inſiſting on this, and thoſe other things above mentioned, which are the ſupport of *Independency*, are plain errors and

(*l*) Euſ. Hiſt. l. 7. c. λ.

miſtakes,

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miſtakes, and deviations from the true Chriſtian Rule and Practice; and are much the worſe, becauſe they are impoſed upon men in the name of God, as if they were his ſpecial Inſtitutions; and thereby tend to create the greater diſturbance to the beſt and moſt regular Conſtitutions of the Chriſtian Church, as if they had departed from the Divine Inſtitutions; and their form and eſtabliſhment is ſuch, that it is not fit to be Communicated with, but may moſt ſafely be forſaken.

FINIS.

AN

ANSWER

TO

Mr. *SERJEANT's*

DISCOURSE

INTITULED,

Sure Footing

IN

CHRISTIANITY.

By *WILLIAM FALKNER.* D.D.

LONDON,

Printed for *Richard Chiſwell,* at the *Roſe* and *Crown* in S. *Paul's* Church-Yard. MDCLXXXIV.

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The first Discourse examined, shewing what properties belong to the Rule of Faith.

THis Author *J. S.* intending, as his Title page tells us, Rational Discourses on the Rule of Faith; which I design to examine, spends his first Discourse in seeking and laying down properties of that Rule. This was indeed requisite to be inquired into; and had it been faithfully managed, as it is not, I had then passed by this Discourse without any Animadversion. But since it is neither accurate nor impartial, some defects, and miscarriages in it, are necessary to be observed. 1.

In this Discourse he examines the sense of these words, 2.
RULE, which (he saith) *signifies a thing able to regulate or guide him who useth it,* §. 2. *and FAITH, which is a believing God in revealed Truths,* §. 8. *which imports some knowledge of supernatural things. He considers that Faith or the knowledge of God, the vulgar may both have, since they may be saved,* §. 8, 9, 10. *and they may have doubts concerning it,* §. 11. *and since this Faith is a rational assent,* §. 12. *which they who are out of the Church should imbrace,* §. 13. *and eminent Wits may be satisfied in,* §. 14. *and the most skill'd Adversaries cannot shew its Rule possibly false,* §. 15. *and this Rule must assure us what Christ said,* §. 16. From this he gathers seven Properties of the *Rule of Faith,* §. 17. 1. *It must be plain and self-evident, as to its existence unto all.* 2. *Evidenceable as to its Ruling Power to Inquirers, even the rude Vulgar.* 3. *Apt to settle and justifie undoubting persons.* 4. *To satisfie fully the Sceptical Dissenters, and rational Doubters.* 5. *To convince the most obsti-*

nate and acute Adversaries. 6. *Built upon unmoveable grounds; that is, absolutely certain in it self.* 7. *And absolutely ascertainable unto us.*

3. Having given some account of his Discourse, I come now to examine, whether he hath laid a sufficient foundation to raise from thence the properties of the Rule of Faith; and then whether the properties mentioned, be rightly raised, and do agree to the Rule of Faith? The ground he lays from the words *Rule* and *Faith*, is not sufficiently sure and stable: for since these words, *Rule of Faith*, even as he treats of them, do admit of some ambiguity in their sense; it had been necessary to have first declared, what was here intended to be signified by them. For besides that the phrase of *regula fidei*, or the *Rule of Faith*, is by *Irenæus* and *Tertullian*, and other Ancients, sometimes made use of for a kind of Creed, or compriſal of the chief Articles of Christian Faith: I say besides this, the word *Rule*, being here a Metaphor, the true meaning of it in this place, must be searched into. Nor doth he sufficiently describe his Rule by saying, it is able to regulate or guide him who useth it: for still by a *Rule* may be understood, either that which is able to guide him who useth it, that by it something to be inquired after, may be discovered knowably; or else a *Rule* is that from which all things about which such a Rule may be made use of, may receive the most exact, perfect, and compleat way of trial and discovery. Now that is not the *Rule of Faith* by which a man may be guided to believe some Divine revealed truths, or most truths, which yet may either misguide in some others, or not most exactly guide to the knowledge of them: but it is that by which all Divine revealed truths are sufficiently discovered, by which there may be had the best determination of all Questions about such truths which are necessary to be decided; and which is the most sure and firm ground of believing every Divine revealed truth.

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The want of considering and observing this, hath cast this Author upon a threefold miscarriage. *First*, He hath omitted the most principal and necessary property of the *Rule of Faith*; which is, that it is the way to know, try and determine all matters of Faith, or revealed Truth; and that it is sufficient to do all this, so far as it is requisite it should be done. For if this property be omitted, all those laid down by this Discourser, will not have light enough to discover which is the *Rule of Faith* certainly and infallibly. For instance, this sentence, *God Created the Heavens and the Earth*, or any other such like, so delivered to us, that it appears certainly to come from God, though it cannot be called a *Rule of Christian Faith*, because it contains not so much Divine truth as is necessary either for every mans Salvation, or for the determining Controversies in Religion, so far as it is requisite they should be decided; and this is received as much amongst the unbelieving *Jews*, as amongst Christians: yet all the properties mentioned by this Discourser, may be applied unto it, as much as to the Rule of Faith. 1. It may be to all self-evident as to its existence, That there is such a truth delivered. 2. It may be knowable, to have a ruling power even to the Vulgar. 3. It may settle them, who undoubtingly receive it. 4. It may satisfie either Dissenters, or Doubters. 5. It may convince Adversaries. 6. It may be certain in it self, and, 7. Ascertainable to us. 4.

A Second miscarriage hence arising, is, That in this Treatise he useth the phrase of the *Rule of Faith* in a very uncertain, fallacious and ambiguous sense; sometimes to signifie one thing, and sometimes another. For under *Faith*, as he treats of it, he sometimes includes all Divine revealed truth, so far as to a general ending of Controversies about them. So *Præf.* §. 7. he saith, *Controversie, or the skill to know what is Faith* ——— *if a Science must be grounded on some self-evident Principle*; and soon after he tells us, *he hath indeavoured to shew the first Principle Catholicks* 5.

licks proceed on self-evident; and this he calls *the first principle in controversie*. Where it is plain he includes under *Faith*, all Divine revealed truths, concerning which there are any Controversies raised. But in *Disc.* 1. §. 8. where he lays as a ground, that the Vulgar are to be saved, that is, are to have Faith or the knowledge of God, he cannot mean, that they must be surely and rationally determined (as he grants Faith must be such an assent) in all points of Faith, about which there is any Controversie: for it is plainly evident, that even amongst the Papists the Learned men have not been determined in all points, *de Fide*, by the help of their Tradition. So by the *Rule of Faith*, he sometimes means an only way to come to Faith, as *Disc.* 2. §. 9, 10. he saith, *Faith is not possible to be had without the Rule of Faith*; other times he understands by it only a sufficient way to come to Faith, as *Disc.* 1. §. 8, 9. he calls it, *the means to arrive at Faith, or come to Faith.* Sometimes he calls it, *the ordinary way to Faith*; so *Corol.* 1. and yet thence concludes, none can pretend to have *Faith*, who hold not to the true *Rule*; and yet as having his heart misgiving him in this confidence, he saith, *Disc.* 1. §. 11. *The Rule of Faith is the best, if not the only means to come to the knowledge of Faith.* Now to treat of *the Rule of Faith* in such a manner, as not to keep to one sense, but some time by his Rule, to mean an only way, sometimes a sufficient way, sometimes an ordinary way, other times the best, if not the only way; and by *Faith*, of which it is the *Rule*, sometimes to understand such Faith as is in all the believing Vulgar, and at other times under *Faith*, to take in all Controversie about matters revealed of God: this is a strange jumbling of different things together, and as it discovers much want of accurateness and rational proceeding in the Author, so in occasions incoherency and confusion in this his Discourse.

A Third miscarriage hence arising is, That he build- 6.
eth part of his discourses upon a supposition which is certainly false, to wit, that all that Faith which is in the Vulgar, or in any others, is immediately produced by the application of the *Rule of Faith*, so *Disc.* 1. §. 8, 9. whence §. 14. he calls the *Rule of Faith*, *the immediate producer and cause of the assent of Faith*; both with reference to the ruder sort, and to the Learned. Now though the *Rule of Faith* be the surest way to beget Faith, or to try any point of Faith, yet is not all Faith in all persons immediately produced by it, but many times by other means. Thus the Discourses of *Origen*, *Tertullian*, and *Cyprian*, and their Writings, have doubtless perswaded and prevailed with many to receive the Christian Faith by them, and believe many things declared in it: yet neither their words, nor writings, were any *Rule of Faith*, since both in some things appear erroneous. The *Goths* were brought in to Christianity by the preaching of the *Arians*, and by that means believed many Christian truths: and of later years, many *Pagans* have believed the Christian Doctrine, some by the preaching of Protestants, and others by the Papists; yet cannot all these ways of delivery be called the *Rule of Faith*, nor indeed any of them. Yea it is sensibly evident, that many Christian truths are received and believed both among Protestants and Papists by the Vulgar, either from the teaching of a Parent, or from a private Doctor or Teacher, which may be subject to some error, and so are not the *Rule of Faith*, since they may misguide: and yet in many things of revealed truth, this is the common case of the Vulgar, before they come to understand the *Rule of Faith*, or that which they own as such; even before the Protestant comes to understand the Scripture, and what is in it contained; and before the Papist understands the Tradition of the Church, and how he may know what is as such delivered; since all that is taught or written by some particular persons cannot be as such received.

7. I come now to examine the particular properties of the *Rule of Faith* above recited. The first property is, That it must be self evident as to its existence to all. His ground for this is, that the rudest Vulgar who are capable of *Faith, are uncapable of any skill by speculation*, §. 3, 4, 9, 10. But *First*, This proves not that it must be self-evident; by which he means, as appears in the following Discourse, that that which is the *Rule of Faith*, appeareth evidently to be such, barely by considering this Rule in it self, without any other helps and advantages: since without this way of self-evidence, it may be sufficiently evidenceable to all capacities, in such a manner as the Vulgar are capable of knowing it. The Statutes of *England*, are a Rule for the decision of Cases in the Law, concerning the matters contained in them; but that they are so, cannot appear satisfactorily in all these Laws, by the bare reading of them: but their being sufficiently and generally attested, and acknowledged to be enacted by the Legislative Power, and unrepealed, evidenceth them to be such. The Vulgar know that the last Will and Testament of a man, is as a Rule, to shew who hath title to the Goods of the deceased; and they are capable of knowing which is the last Will and Testament of a person, otherwise than from the bare reading of it; to wit, by the full witness and evident testimony of credible persons concerning it. The ordinary *Jews* were capable of knowing the *ten Commandments*, and the Books of *Moses* to be given them from God, to guide them, otherwise than by the reading of them; to wit, by delivery of them as such, by the constant testimony of all the *Jews*, in that and the succeeding Ages. Whence it may appear to be self-evident, that the Vulgar are capable of receiving other proof than self-evidence, though not by deep speculation, yet by testimonial evidence. Nor 2. Will it hence follow from his proof, that the *Rule of Faith* should be evident to all as to its existence. By *all* he cannot here include them, who have

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no knowledge of Gospel Revelation: But I suppose he intends all who have faith, or are in the way to attain it. But in this latitude, it is no property of the *Rule of Faith*, to be actually evident to all these; since there may be some Faith which is not immediately grounded upon the Rule, as was before shewed. Howbeit since the *Rule of Faith* is intended to confirm and determine matters of faith, so that they may be received with a full and firm assent, and is thence of great use to all, to settle and stablish them in the faith; I assert, that the *Rule of Faith* is evidenceable unto all, or may be made evident unto all who have capacities of reason, both that it is, and that it is a Rule, if they be willing to receive that evidence which is sufficient.

The second property, That it is evidenceable as to its ruling power, to Enquirers, even the rude Vulgar, I allow; supposing them willing to be satisfied with good evidence. 8.

The third property I admit, That it is apt to settle and justifie undoubting persons, that is, that they who rely on it without doubting, may be satisfied, that they act rationally. 9.

The fourth property is, That it is able to satisfie the most Sceptical Dissenters, and rational Doubters. Had he appeared only to mean by Sceptical, the most curiously inquisitive, I would readily have granted this property: but it is suspicious, that he includes such Scepticks, as design to reject evidence; because when he applies this Rule, *Dist.* 3. *Q.* 3. he speaks of his Sceptick, *as one who would find somewhat to reply rationally, or at least would maintain his suspence, with a, Might it not be otherwise?* If he indeed includes persons who set themselves to reject evidence; I answer, the *Rule of Faith* needeth not be able to satisfie them, nor can it; since they are not capable of satisfaction: and such were many of the Heathen Philosophers, of the Hereticks among Christians, and probably of the Scribes and Pharisees. All he said for the proof of this 10.

property,

property was, *That those who are out of the Church, are intended by Christ to be brought in to embrace the faith, and persons of highest reason and enquiry in the Church may be satisfied concerning the faith*, §. 13, 14. This is true of them who will embrace light and evidence where they find it, but not of them who reject it; and Protestants will affirm, that the *Rule of Faith* (taking in the testimonial evidence which is given concerning that Rule) is able to satisfie all Dissenters or Doubters, who are ready and willing to receive rational satisfaction.

11. The fifth property is, That it must be able to convince the most obstinate and acute Adversaries. This he supposeth proved from §. 15. *Because such Adversaries the Church will have, and the highest advantage they can have against the Church, is, to shew her Rule uncertain.* But this only proves, that enough may be said for the *Rule of Faith*, to vindicate it against all such Adversaries, which is indeed true; yea, and more than this, that enough may be said to convince them, if they will attend to it, and be not obstinate; and however to satisfie all unprejudiced men, that these obstinate Adversaries are in error, and may be confuted. But more than this, is no way necessary to provide for the conviction of the obstinate. If *Porphyry*, *Celsus*, or *Julian* were not convinced; shall any conclude, that God was wanting in the *Rule of Faith* to his Church? But indeed the satisfaction of such Heathen Adversaries must be procured, not only from the *Rule of Faith*, which will shew what was delivered by *Jesus*, and the Apostles, and Prophets, but also from other arguments and testimonial evidence, not only to prove, that this Rule was delivered by *Jesus*, but also to shew the things so delivered, to be of God, and therefore true.

12. The sixth and seventh properties, That it is certain in it self, and ascertainable to us, I do admit. And indeed these two properties (if by *ascertainable to us*, we understand, that we may be sufficiently certain concerning the Rule, and what is contained in it) include all the former,

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so far as they are truly applicable to the *Rule of Faith*. For to be certain and ascertainable to us, includes so much of his two first properties, as belong to this *Rule of Faith*; that is, it is evidenceable to all, both as to its being and its ruling power; seeing to be evidenceable, and to be ascertainable, is one and the same thing. Yea, if it be certain, and it's certainly thus ascertainable or evidenceable to us, his third, fourth and fifth Properties will be the consequent effects hereof, so far as they of right appertain to this *Rule of Faith*; that is, where there appears certainty ascertainable, it will have these effects; it will justifie them who most stedfastly and undoubtingly rely on it, and will satisfie inquisitive Dissenters and rational Doubters, and will be able to convince the most acute Adversaries: Whence it appears, that his seven Properties are needlesly and without sufficient distinction multiplied, and all the rest are well reducible to the two last: to which, if we add what I before observed concerning this Rule, that it must be the best Guide in all matters of faith, we have then three Properties, which alone are sufficient to direct us to the *Rule of Faith*; to wit, its certainty, its evidenceableness; and its fulness, exactness and compleatness as to all points of faith. But since his Discourse I now examine, is ordered according to his seven Properties, saving that he himself *Disc.* 2. confounds, or at least conjoyns the two former, it is necessary for me to follow him in his own way, and to examine the *Rule of Faith*, by what we have found to belong to it in all these Properties.

Answer to Disc. 2. *shewing, that the two first Properties of the* Rule of Faith, *do agree to Scripture.*

1. OUR next work is to examine by these marks, what the *Rule of Faith* is. He tells us, §. 1. *That the owned pretenders to it, are only two, Scripture and Tradition*; but withal insinuates, *That Protestants do indeed make private Spirit, private Reason, and the Testimonies of Fathers the* Rule of Faith; *because these are they which do ascertain them of Scripture sense.* Now, we Protestants do own Scripture as our *Rule of Faith*, which was surely delivered to us, by succession from the Apostles; and do assert, that what ever Properties do belong to the *Rule of Faith*, are truly and fully applicable to the Scripture: but unwritten Tradition we reject from being this Rule, knowing that there is no certain and infallible delivery of Christian Doctrine thereby. Nor do we any way make either private Reason or a private Spirit (whether he mean an Enthusiastick Spirit, which Protestants disclaim, or the same thing with private Reason) or Testimonies of Fathers our *Rule of Faith.* For if Protestants should try any Doctrine by any of these immediately, without referring them to Scripture, they would, as to that Doctrine, make them their Rule: but this no Protestant will do in matters of meer belief, or supernatural Revelation. But if they make use of their reason to apprehend the words, phrases and sense of the Scripture, that thereby they may more fitly judge, what the Scripture will determine as to any matter of faith, this is no more to make this a Rule, than an Artist who measures any Materials by an exact known Rule, can be said to make his eye his Rule, because he judges by his eye, how his

his Rule is applyed to the thing measured: but in case he shall make use only of his eye, without any other Rule, then only can his eye be called his Rule. Indeed the followers of Tradition and all rational men, may as well be charged with making private reason their Rule, as the followers of Scripture; since by reason they are ascertained of Traditions sense: for they make use of reason to judge what the words signifie which are delivered to them, and what ground they have to receive them; else could not their assent of Faith be, as this Author acknowledgeth it must be, rational, *Disc.* 1. *q.* 14. unless he can imagine, a man to give a rational assent, which is not directed by reason.

Nor can we be said to make the Testimonies of Fathers our Rule, though in plain truths we value them, owning the same truth which we embrace, as delivered by the Rule. In some more difficult Scriptures, we make use of them to satisfie our reason, by their reason and evidence: and this is to use them in the same manner we use our reason. In other places difficult, we make use of their authority, as a probable motive to perswade us to encline to a sense by them delivered, if it be not contradicted by greater authority or reason. But in this case, where there is no other evidence, we do not urge such an interpretation, or such a sense of such a Scripture, necessary to be received as a Point of Faith, but allow it in such a measure probable and to be assented to, as the Authorities shall require. 2.

q. 2. He notes, that *when we make Scripture our Rule, we must understand not Scripture sens'd, but to be sensed; that is, their characters in a Book with their aptness to signifie.* I answer, We assert the written words of Scripture to be a *Rule of Faith*, as the words therein contained do manifest their own sense, being in themselves in all things fit and necessary to be known, sufficiently intelligible by men whom God hath endued with reason and understanding. That is, the words of Scripture which are written by inspiration 3.

from God, do in the same manner declare Gods meaning in what he reveals, which is the Doctrine of Faith; as words written and spoken by men, declare their sense and meaning to one another; and thus we own them to be the *Rule of Faith.*

4. §. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. He frames six Objections against the Scriptures being sufficiently evidenceable to the Vulgar, which excludes his two first Properties of the *Rule of Faith.* First, *They cannot be certain by self-evidence, that this is Gods Word; which cannot be discovered, but by deep speculation; nor can this be concluded, till all seeming contradictions are solved,* §. 3. Secondly, *Nor can they know how many Books are divinely inspired, either by self-evidence, or by any skill they are possest of,* §. 4. Thirdly, *Nor is it evidenceable to their capacities, that the originals are any where preserved entire; nor can they be assured of the skills of others by which they know it,* §. 5. Fourthly, *Nor can they know that the Scriptures are rightly translated; for they are not capable to judge of the honesty and skill of the Translators,* §. 6. Fifthly, *If it be most truly translated, yet innumerable Copies, before Printing, and since Printers and Correctors of the Press are to be relyed on, by which means they can have no evidence of the right letter of Scripture,* §. 7. Lastly, *Still they are far to seek, unless they were certain of the true sense of Scripture, which the numerous Commentators and infinite Disputes, about concerning Points and Christs Divinity, shew not to be the task of the vulgar,* §. 8.

5. *Ad* §. 3. To the first Objection I answer, That it is sufficiently evidenceable even to the Vulgar, that the Scriptures are the Word of God. Now though the self-evidence of this or what may be gathered by inspection into the Book of Scripture, is very considerable, *as to the truths contained in Scripture*; by observing that it contains powerful and heavenly Doctrines, suitable to God, and great Prophecies wonderfully fulfilled: yet *as to the writing which contains these truths,* we have another more plain way, and generally evidenceable to all persons, to assure them, that these

these Books are Gods Word: which is, that by the general delivery or tradition of the Church of Christ, or of all who appear to have the chief care of their own souls, these Books have in all Ages since Christ, and almost in all Countreys been preserved, as the Writings of the Prophets, Apostles and Evangelists; they have constantly and publickly read them as such, and given them to us, as containing that Doctrine which was so wonderfully confirmed by Miracles. In this manner we receive all the Books of Holy Scripture as Gods Word; and by this way we have a plain, and withal a very full certainty; or by this means in S. *Austin*'s words *De Civ. Dei, lib.* 15. *c.* 23. *The authority of the true Scriptures comes to us from the Fathers, by a most certain and known succession.*

Compare the certainty of it, with any Historical Writings in the World, or with any other matters of fact in any former Age, and the certainty of Scripture is much the greater; because it is more generally delivered, and hath been more constantly read. Compare this again with any Records in the World, and the knowledge of any Charter of any Society: the Records of a Court, the Statutes of a Colledge, or the Charter of a Corporation, are surely known to be such by the Officers of that Court, and the Members of that Corporation, and even by the Vulgar in a succeeding Age, because they are in written Records delivered as such to them; and every one taketh this to be a sufficient certainty; especially if he know, that all foregoing Members of such Societies, or Officers of such Courts, are under the obligation of an Oath, to preserve such Records or Charters entire: and upon this evidence they doubt not to believe, what this Record or Charter doth contain. And much more certain is the delivery of Scripture Records as the Word of God; since there are not only one, but great multitudes of Christian Societies over the whole World, who all agree in this delivery: and all these Societies, by their Profession, and the Christian Sacraments, are under the highest obligations not to falsifie 6.

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in any thing; and especially, in the delivery of such Monuments which are of Divine Inspiration. To all this add the great evidence we have from the Writings of the ancient Fathers, that they did religiously own and honour this Book, as the Word of God. Lastly, Compare the certainty of this truth of the Word of God being contained in Scripture, with the certainty of Doctrine by unwritten Tradition, or rather with its uncertainty; wherein we must consider, that this delivering to us the writing of the Holy Scriptures, is of the same nature with that, whereby Monuments, preserved Records or Charters are delivered from one generation to another; which the common apprehensions of men shew, to be a much surer way of delivery, than this Tradition by way of hearsayes: since in every Corporation, which hath a Charter delivered down safely from their Predecessors, if the Members of it would be sure what are the Priviledges that belong to it, they will not think it the safest way to enquire, what are the common Opinions of that Society, and rely on this, which is like the way of Oral Tradition: but they will consult the Charter it self, and so rest satisfied in what is there contained in their sure Records. And the vulgar Christians will conclude the truth of Christian Doctrine, or what God delivered, to be more fully in the Scripture, than in the words of other Christians or Tradition, by the same way, but by much greater evidence, than that, by which men of all Societies, will conclude the truth of what concerns their Priviledges, or what Emperours or Kings have granted them, to be more fully contained in their Charters, than in common reports.

7. Nor is this Tradition which we honour, owned by us, a Rule of our Faith, but a rational evidence, or a help and ground of our knowledge of this truth, that the Scriptures are the Word of God, or the Writings divinely inspired. For in matters of Faith, though a man is supported by reason, which will give an account why he owns such a testimony to be from God; yet as to the matter or thing believed,

lieved, he doth not exercise his reason, to prove the truth of the thing by rational evidence, but submits his reason to rely on the credibility of the Divine Testimony, and upon this Testimony, owns what is attested by it: but when we say, we own the Scriptures to be Gods Word, by the forementioned way of Tradition, we act our reason as to the thing received by us; and do own and acknowledge this as truth, from that rational evidence which Tradition affords to our reason; and so do receive it as true in a way of rational knowledge, which by this Traditional evidence we prove truth. The things contained in Scripture we receive by faith, because contained in a divinely inspired Writing; and here we enquire not for rational evidence, to prove them true. Here then we can be no more said to build our faith on the Rule of Tradition, than publick Justice can be said to be administred by the Rule of Tradition, when Cases are decided by Acts of Parliament which have been successively delivered from one Age to another.

But as he hath hitherto builded on a mistake, to imagine that we have no way to prove Scripture the Word of God, but only by considering the Letter of Scripture in it self: so in the end of §. 3. he supposeth, that we must be able to satisfie all seeming contradictions in Scripture, before we can own it to be Gods Word. But cannot every ordinary Christian both humbly and truly acknowledge, that in things delivered by God, there may be many things above his understanding to comprehend, and above his apprehension to reconcile, which yet may be in themselves both true and good? In this doing, we have the same ground to believe Scripture to be Gods Word; which S. *Austin* had in his forsaking *Manicheism*, who makes this Confession to God, *Confes. lib. 6. c. 5. Thou didst perswade me, that they were to be blamed, not who believed thy Books, which almost in all Nations thou hast established on so great authority, but who believed them not. Therefore when we were unable by evident reason to find out truth,*

truth, and for this cause had need of the authority of the holy Scriptures, I now began to believe, that thou wouldst by no means have given to that Scripture so excellent authority throughout all Lands, unless thou wouldst that thou shouldst be believed by it, and that thou shouldest be sought by it. Now the absurdities which used to offend me, I referred to the height of the Mysteries.

Ad Q. 4. To the second Objection, concerning the number of the Books of holy Scripture, I shall first enquire, What ground the Vulgar have to own all the Books received by Protestants, and particularly by the Church of *England* as Canonical, to be the divinely inspired Scriptures, or the Word of God? Now they may safely and with good ground receive all these Books, because they are so owned by the same above-mentioned Tradition or delivery of all Churches, as they received them from the beginning: nor was there ever in the Church any doubt of the Books we receive of the Old Testament, or of any of the Evangelists, or of the most of the Epistles. And though there was some doubt at some time, in some places, concerning some few Books; yet these doubts were never general: nor did they in any place continue, but were check'd by known consent in the beginning of Christianity; of which S. *Hierom* speaks *ad Dardanum Ep.* 129. *We receive them following the authority of antient Writers.* Now that all these Books have been alwayes thus delivered by the Catholick Church as the Word of God, the Vulgar hath sufficient reason to acknowledge, since it hath the same certainty with the way of delivering so many preserved Records, by the agreement of such multitudes of Societies, which is a much more certain way than Oral Tradition of Christs Doctrine, as was shewed *n.* 6. This delivery of these Books, is commonly asserted by the present Age, and by men of greatest knowledge amongst the Protestants: nor at this time doth the *Roman* Church reject any of them. Though indeed S. *Hierom* tells us, *That in his time the* Latin *Custom did not receive the Epistle to the* Hebrews

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amongst Canonical Scriptures, in his Commentaries upon *Isa.* 6. and *Isa.* 8. and elsewhere. Which *Eusebius* also takes notice of, *Eccl. Hist. lib.* 3. *c.* 3. *& lib.* 6. *c.* 21. So that the *Roman* Church was not then the most faithful preserver of what was delivered in the Church Catholick, which did acknowledge this and the other Scriptures, by which they are sufficiently delivered to us, and by which S. *Hierom* did receive even this Epistle, as he particularly writes in the above-mentioned Epistle *ad Dardanum*.

Now being secure of these Books, we are sure that we have safe delivery of all necessary truth required to salvation: for as it is observable, that concerning the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, no other Church, nor the present *Roman* Church, doth pretend to any other Book of Scripture in the New Testament: so S. *Luke chap.* 1. hath assured us, that in his Gospel are written what things are necessary to be believed as the Christian Faith. So that hitherto it appears, how common Christians may know enough for their salvation: and yet further, they knowing all these Books to be of God, can thence conclude, that whatever is declared in them is true, and what ever is condemned there, is false or evil; and by this means they may attain much knowledge. 10.

And though these vulgar Christians may safely be unacquainted with the Controversie concerning the Apocryphal Books, as is evident from what is above said; and men of greater learning and knowledge, for whom the tryal of all Controversies is a more proper work, are and may be fully certain concerning it, by their fully perceiving what was the *Jewish* and *Christian* Churches Tradition in this point; yet the vulgar may possibly be sufficiently satisfied, that none of those Books are part of the Scriptures divinely inspired. For since they can understand from men of knowledge and learning, that none of those Books were received in the *Jewish* Church, to whom the Oracles of God were committed: Nor were they any of them generally received as of divine inspiration, and 11.

for proof of Doctrines, by the Catholick Christian Church; they may thence conclude, that it is as safe for them not to own them as such, as it was for the Catholick Christian Church, and the *Jewish* Church, whom neither Christ nor his Apostles charged with any sin and corruption in this particular. And likewise they may see, that they have as little reason to be guided by the particular *Romish* Church, in opposition to the Church Catholick concerning these Books, as S. *Hierom* had concerning the Epistle to the *Hebrews*; especially since they of *Rome* have not fixedly kept and declared the same Books at all times for Scripture.

12. Thus we have a certainty of the Canon of Scripture, which Protestants own for their Rule: but this Discourser cannot but know that concerning Traditions, which he makes his Rule; neither the vulgar Papists, nor yet the learned can certainly know in all points, how many and which are truly such, which hath occasioned great disputes, and high contests amongst them of the *Romish* Church.

13. *Ad* §. 5. To the third Objection, concerning the preserving of the Originals, I answer, That it is not necessary for the vulgar, either to know or enquire concerning the Originals; it is enough for him to have evidence, that the Scriptures remain entire, though he know not what Language was their Original. But if it be enquired, how every one may know, that these Scriptures are preserved entire, and how they who have any apprehensions of the Original, may know, that it is incorrupt as to the faith it contains, he may thus be satisfied. When he considers, that it is Gods Word delivered to the World for their use, that they may know him and believe him, as we before shewed; this common Christian may thence conclude, that if he does his best to enquire, God will preserve his Word so free from corruption, that it shall not misguide him to his hurt. And when he further knows, that the Church of God hath alwayes had the highest esteem of these

these Books of any others in the world, and the greatest care of them, and that there are infinite Copies of them, in several Regions of the World, both in Originals and Translations, which that they all contain in them an agreement in the same matters of truth, he hath good reason to believe, because it is generally asserted by the best and most learned men this vulgar Christian knows; and even the *Romanists* who design to speak all they can against the certainty of Scripture, have never yet dared to affirm the contrary: for though there be many various readings, yet not such which will mis-guide in any matter of Faith. These things will make him more secure of the Scriptures being preserved entire, than any man can be of the Statutes of the Land, or of any Histories, or any other Records whatsoever; that is, he hath the greatest evidence of its integrity, that can be of any Writing in the World, which had its original some Ages past, and infinitely a greater evidence than can be given for Oral Tradition being preserved. For if one Record be commonly acknowledged a more certain preservative of truth, and in it self less lyable to corruption, than common fame; much more when so numerous Records, or carefully and religiously transcribed Copies all agree. Again, when he considereth that in the *Jewish* Church the Scriptures were, untill the coming of Christ, in very corrupt times, and amongst very corrupt persons, preserved so entire, that Christ sendeth to them to learn Religion; he hath great reason to judge the New Testament preserved entire, since we cannot suppose Providence less careful of the New Testament than of the Old, and there are now abundantly more Copies, both Translations and Originals (and old Translations speak the agreement of the old Originals whence they were translated) and these Scriptures highly valued, and publickly read in a constant manner, in so many places of the World; and all agree in all points of Faith. Nor could they possibly be any where all corrupted to one purpose, in a way so apparent to sense, as words written are, since

there never was any General Council, collected out of all parts of the World, to determine any thing concerning the various Scripture readings, or the alteration of any Copies; if any such had been, it is possible there might have been some corruption general, if not by confederacy, yet by mistake, unless the former Copies should yet remain to discover this, as it is certain many very ancient Copies, and probably more ancient than any General Council, yet remain in the World; as for instance, that written by *Tecla*, in our Kings Library, sent from *Cyrill* Patriarch of *Constantinople*.

14. *Ad §. 6.* To the fourth Objection, concerning the Vulgars knowledge of the right Translation of Scripture, I grant their knowledge of Scripture is by Translations. S. *Austin* observed *de Doct. Christiana, lib. 2. c. 4. The holy Scriptures being spread abroad far and wide, by the various Tongues of the Interpreters, are made known to the Nations for their salvation.* And a man of mean capacity may be satisfied concerning Translations, if he consider that he hath reason to judge, that the Original Languages may be understood by men of learning, partly because himself by use and observing, hath learnt his own Mother-Tongue, and therefore hath reason to think, that others by the same means, may learn other Languages; and particularly those wherein the Scriptures were written: partly because he thinks it injurious to the Goodness & Wisdom of God, to imagine, that he should give forth a writing to guide the World, and that it should be in a Language which was not intelligible; and partly because he hears that so many Churches have these Books translated, and that even such as this Discourser, who would cast and suggest all doubts they can concerning Scripture translated into the common Tongues, yet dare they not say, that it is not capable of being translated, so as to deliver the same matters of Faith: yea, the Papists themselves both use, allow of, and many of them endeavour to make new Translations. Having gone thus far, he may further consider, that if it can be truly

truly translated, he hath reason to judge, that such men who have the common fame, even amongst the Learned, for men of skill in Languages, are best able to give the sense of the words contained in those Languages; and he can conclude, that whatever God thought requisite for him to know from this Book, is so written, that such men of Learning are able to give the sense of it: and that whatever in any phrase cannot by such be understood, is something fit to be further enquired into, but not necessary to be now known. Yea further, he can conclude, that he hath reason to conceive, that the Translation with us in use, doth contain in it the true Doctrine of Christ, which is in the Original; because he heareth this oft averred by honest and learned men amongst us, and because the Papists who are professed enemies to this Translation, yet dare not, nor do not assert the contrary; but raise only some more inconsiderable Cavils about phrases. By this I suppose our vulgar Christian satisfied: if this Discourser be not with this answer, let him consider a parallel case. If many *English* men should purposely go to *France* to give a description of that Countrey, and they take a particular view of all places, and write this, and all agree together, and many thousand others who after go to see it, all agree in all material things; yea, and when many others shall go over on purpose to find fault with this description, who yet can find nothing very material to object, but only carp at small things; will this Author say, that all this can signifie nothing to inform him satisfactorily who stayes at home, unless he could be able to demonstrate to himself, that they indeed were in *France*, as they all agree, and that they did see what they wrote. Either this is something very considerable, and rational to engage assent; or else against all reason, most *English* men have confessed, that there is such a place as *Rome*, and such a person as is called the Pope, when we never saw either *it* or *him*.

Ad Q. 7. To the fifth Objection, concerning printed Copies. Before I answer this, I shall observe, that as it is 15.

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suspicious in the whole Book, here is manifestly evident, either a piece of gross ignorance in the Writer, or a designed cheat upon his Reader: for since he apparently designs his Book for *English* men, and all our *English* Translations now in ordinary use, had their original since our departing from Popery; and our generally received Translation is not above Fifty Three Years older than his Book, yet he would have the vulgar to imagine, that there might be many faults in transcribing these Translations, in innumerable Copies before Printing, when Printing was long before these Translations were first made. But to pass this by, ordinary Protestants may be thus satisfied concerning the Printed Copies of the Scripture, by considering that there is as great care taken about Printing Bibles, as about copying Records, and more than about Printing any other Books: and yet this Author (who would perswade others to doubt so much of the Printers keeping to the truth of the Copy before him, as to the sense of it) I suppose would not have sent his Book to the Press, if he had thought indeed, the sense of it was not like to be expressed in Print: He may further consider, that our *English* Bibles are daily read, publickly or privately, by learned men, and compared with the Originals, and found to agree with them, except in some particular errors of Print, which as they are not in many expressions, may be discerned by common observation. And the ordinary Christian hath the more cause to be confident, of our ordinary Impressions of the Bible, because even the Papists, who are enemies to them, and do peruse them, yet dare not charge them to vary from the first translated Copies, more than is above expressed.

16. *Ad* §. 8. To the sixth and last Objection, concerning the sense of Scripture, I answer, The faith of the vulgar (no nor of the learned neither) doth not require a certain knowledge of the sense of all Scripture. The discovery of God, what he is, and of Christ, and what he did and suffered for us, and of the Gospel Promises and Commands, and

and such like, are so plain, that he who can understand any thing of common speech, may understand so much of them, as is necessary for him to know: yea, they are in Scripture oft delivered in the very words and phrases, which Christ himself and the Apostles and Prophets made use of to their hearers, to instruct them in the faith and holy life: and therefore he who will censure the Scripture as not sufficiently plain to teach the great truths of God, must condemn the Apostles likewise and Christ himself, as not teaching, so as to be understood; and then must impiously tell the World, that either none were by them brought to the faith, or that they who were, did not understand it. Indeed he thinks strangely of man, who imagineth that he must go to an Oracle, to understand such things as these, That Christ came into the World to save sinners, That he dyed for our sins, and rose again, and shall judge the World: If these and such like plain words, which are abundantly in the holy Scriptures, cannot be understood by common capacities, I dare affirm, that they can never know these truths, by any words and phrases, and so can never be helped by such men as this Discourser, who can shew no other ordinary way to teach the matters of meer belief, but by words, unless they will embrace Enthusiasm. Indeed many things in Scripture are hard to be understood: concerning which, this ordinary Christian may satisfie himself, that since God gave him this Book to lead him to God, it is evident from Gods end in writing it, that he hath expressed so much as is necessary for him to know, that it is not beyond his capacity to discern it, if he diligently attend to it: and what he is not capable of understanding, he may be ignorant of, without fear of losing salvation by such ignorance; provided he be careful to use such means as God affords him, and be willing to receive further instruction, as he shall be capable of further knowledge. And then this ordinary Christian may by this means be of a sound mind, and of a more knowing head in matters of Faith, than most Papists are, who know-

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as little, or less of the things which are obscure in Scripture, than Protestants do; and by this means he may own Christs Divinity, as may appear, *n.* 23.

17. Having now shewed, that in all his Arguments hitherto produced, against the Scriptures being the *Rule of Faith*, there is nothing rational; I shall now briefly shew, that the promoting such Cavils as these, or being perswaded by them, would be a way very much to hinder Piety, and even wholly to disown Christianity, which I shall do, in applying most or all his Arguments to some particular Cases.

18. We read that *Josiah* when the Book of the Law was found, did by that, in a Pious and Religious Zeal, reform the corrupt wayes of Worship, which is of the nature of Practical Tradition, 2 *Kings* 23. 2, 3, 4. and from thence received the determination of very considerable Points of Doctrine, which no Oral Tradition had brought down to him: to wit, what great wrath God had denounced against *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, for the neglect of keeping that Law, 2 *Kings* 22. 13, 19. This pious work of his, for which he was so highly commended by God himself, 2 *Kings* 22. 19, 20. and *Chap.* 23. 25. *That there was no King like him, before or after him*, should never have been performed by him, had he hearkned to such a Tempter as this Discourser. For 1. *Josiah* could not more certainly know the Book of the Law, to be the Word of God, than Protestants now do the Book of Scriptures. 2. And *Josiah* had only the Books of *Moses*, 2 *Chron.* 34. 13. and could then no more know the whole Canon of Scripture, than we do. 3. And before this Book was found, he knew not that these Scriptures were any where preserved; and after it was found, having only one Copy, and that probably written by they knew not whom, he had not so much evidence of its integrity, as Protestants now have of the whole Scriptures, by the consent of all Copies. 4. And if he was not capable of knowing the sense truly, he should neither have humbled himself, nor have reformed

med *Judah*. Thus we see it would have destroyed his Piety, to have been guided by these irrational Objections.

Consider next the state of Christianity. When Christ came into the World, as he condemns the Traditions of the Scribes and Pharisees, which made void Gods Commandments; so in the great Point of Faith concerning the *Messias*, who and what manner of person he should be, *&c.* Christ sends his hearers to the Scriptures to learn, *John* 5. 39. and S. *Peter* when he spake of the glory of the Transfiguration, yet saith, 2 *Pet.* 1. 19. *We have a more sure word of Prophecy, to which you do well to take heed.* Yet the *Jews* then had no more certainty than we have, that Scriptures are Gods Word, how many Books there are, that they were preserved entire, that they were rightly translated, and rightly copied; and that they had the right sense. Now he who thinks not this a Rule sure enough, to reject the then contrary Traditions of the Scribes and Pharisees (as that he must be a great Temporal Prince, and such like) must own the Pharisees to be rather in the right, than our Saviour and his Apostles. And yet all these Arguments of our Discourser would here take place, even those which concern Translations; for at that time the *Jews* (who after the Captivity did not commonly understand the *Hebrew*) did make use of, some the *Syriack* or *Chaldee* Translations, which though of *Hebrew* Original, as much differs from it as our *English* from the *Saxon*; and others, and those very many, of the *Greek* Version, which is as much different from the *Hebrew*, as our *English* is from either of them. 19.

His §. 9, 10, 11. contain what he would perswade his Reader, a Protestant would say against his Discourse, which he undertakes to answer. These things concern not us who have already returned our own Answer, otherwise than to let him know, that sober Protestants do not speak so weakly and absurdly, as in some things he there represents them. 20.

21. §. 12. He sayes, *Some will reply, fundamentals are clear in Scripture.* True indeed, some do reply to this purpose, and not only Protestants, but the ancient Fathers, upon the like occasion. Thus *Origen* when *Celsus* in opposing Christianity, urged the obscurity and uncertain sense of Scriptures, *Orig. lib. 7. cont. Cels.* answers, *That whatever was useful for their hearers to understand, and might confer any thing to the amending of their lives, these things the Prophets spake without all covertness, according to the will of God. But such things as were mystical, and matters of higher enquiry and speculation, than the vulgar were capable of, these things they declared by allegories and dark sayings. Austin, de Doct. Christiana, lib. 2. c. 9.* saith, *Among those things which are plainly set down in Scripture, are found all those things which contain faith and manners.* And *Athanasius* with his Council of *Egypt*, in their Synodical Epistle to *Jovian* the Emperour, tell him, *That the true and religious faith in our Lord Jesus Christ is plain to all, being both known and read out of the divine Scriptures*: and all these sayings include fundamentals being clear in Scripture.

22. Against such Answers or Replies, he (who should first have considered, whether his Church had ever given a Catalogue of Traditions in Points *de fide*, or can yet agree to do it, which he knows they cannot; against himself as well as against reason) tells us, *That a perfect Catalogue of fundamentals was never yet agreed upon, and without this all goes to wrack*; and then he enquires, *Whether this be a fundamental, that Christ is God?* and *Whether this be clearer in Scripture, than that God hath hands, feet, nostrills and passions like ours?* Concerning the Catalogue of Fundamentals, though as to matters of meer belief, Protestants have oft asserted, that the Creed contains them all; yet the requiring such a Catalogue, in this case, from Protestants, as it is needless, so to a sober Enquirer will seem ridiculous: and the only true way to disprove this Assertion, is to shew something to be fundamental, which is not plain enough in Scripture to be thence believed. To put a like case,

If

If I should assert, That in *England* may be had all things, which are necessary for the convenient subsistence of man: would it not be a thing ridiculous to say, that till I could distinguish all things necessary for this subsistence, from things unnecessary, and produce a Catalogue of them, this cannot be truly asserted. For, suppose such an enumeration of things necessary attempted, if any thing be omitted, which to another seems necessary, and is in *England*; or if some thing be inserted, which seems not necessary, and yet is in *England*, still this assertion of all things necessary for subsistence being here, may stand good, and can no way be disproved, but by shewing, that there is somewhat necessary for mans subsistence, which cannot be had in *England*.

This I suppose this Author did discern, and therefore 23.
will here venture to instance in a Fundamental not clear in Scripture; but I think he will come off with very bad success. It is concerning the Divinity of Christ, which we own a fundamental: and if this Author shall say it is not so plain in Scripture, as thence to be believed, he must contradict S. *John*, who tells us, he wrote for this purpose, that *we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God*, *John* 20. 31. So that he must either grant, that this is so plain in Scripture, that there is sufficient evidence there for our believing it; or else he must say, that when the Evangelist wrote that we should *believe him to be the Son of God*, he had no eye to our believing his Divinity, or his being God; and he who will so assert, will deny this to be a fundamental; or else he must say, that the Evangelist, and the Holy Ghost who inspired him, mistook in supposing enough written to declare his Divinity. But he here seems to object, and elsewhere, that some who seem to follow the letter of the Scripture deny this, as the *Socinians*. What then? This is not for want of evidence in Scripture, but from making or devising wayes to avoid this evidence. Will this Author say, that there was no evidence, of there being Angels and Spirits, amongst the

Jews, because the *Sadducees*, who had opportunity of observing all such evidence, believed neither Angel nor Spirit? And will he say, that there was no clear evidence from the Word of Christ and his Miracles, that they *were from God*, because the *Pharisees* and other unbelieving *Jews*, who conversed with him, and saw his Miracles, and heard his Word, yet did not acknowledge them *from God*.

24. Now if this be so clear from Scripture, as thence to be believed, and that God hath hands, feet, and passions like ours, be not so delivered, as I shall shew in answer to his next Discourse, where he urgeth this again; then I may safely and truly conclude, that the Divinity of Christ is much more clear in Scripture, than the other. Indeed that God hath hands, *&c.* like ours, I know not of the least intimation of any such thing in the letter of Scripture, though it should not be allowed the common and usual Figures of Speech, which are intelligible enough to men of Reason; since when it speaks of Gods Hand or Arm, or the like, it plainly shews them not like ours, as God said to *Job*, Job 40. 9. *Hast thou an arm like God, and canst thou thunder with a voice like him?*

These two properties therefore of the *Rule of Faith* are agreeable to Scripture, notwithstanding all this Author hath jointly objected against it.

An

An Answer to his third Discourse, *shewing, that the three next Properties of the* Rule of Faith, *are agreeable to Scripture.*

IN §. 1. and 2. he layes down his third Property of the *Rule of Faith*; *That it must be apt to settle and justifie those unlearned persons, who rely undoubtingly upon it*; *that this may be done, such a person*, he saith, *must proceed on such Principles as he takes to be true ones. Thus he cannot act in receiving Scripture*; *because as he can himself have no self-evidence of its being Gods Word, so it is senseless for men to believe a multitude, which sayes, it may possibly err in what it tells them. Or if here skill in History, Language or Fathers, may secure them from error, this he cannot judge of. And principally when he considers, that they who pretend to Scripture, differ, and condemn and persecute each other*; *his reason will tell him, that since there is but one truth, for want of the light or directive power of that Rule, they all but one party, and may be that also, go miserably astray.* 1.

To this I answer, The Principles which he relies on, who closeth with Scripture, are such as may abundantly satisfie him; which indeed will follow from what was said to the former Discourse, concerning the rational evidence he hath of the Scripture. What he adds, that it is senseless to receive Scriptures as Gods Word, from the delivery of a multitude, who say they may possibly err; is, if not a senseless, yet a very unaccountable Assertion. Will he think that nothing can be credited that is seen by the eye, because in a mist or some dark place, the eye may be possibly mistaken? or can there be nothing truly known by 2.

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the understanding of a man, because he who is Master of the best reason, may in some things misapprehend? if this Author would thus argue, he must disclaim all pretences to demonstrations and Science, yea, and certainty likewise in all things in the World. We know in common affairs that all men are capable of being mistaken; where they have not sufficient evidence: and yet we do not thence discredit the preservation of Records and Charters, as if that could be no way assured, since we know men are capable here of sufficient evidence to inform them; and Protestants are no more fallible, nor acknowledge themselves no more fallible than all men are; that is, they may be deceived where they have not sufficient light, and evidence to discern by: but where they have this light, and discern and receive it, there they neither are, nor can be deceived; and such evidence as we have shewed, they have of the Scriptures; so that the knowledge thus grounded in Protestants, is infallibly certain, not from the infallibility of the persons, as if they were no where liable to error; but from the infallibleness of the clear evidence of truth, which whoever receives, is certainly, as to that thing so evidenced, free from error. Yet we receive Gods Word not only from the delivery of Protestants, but of all ancient Churches, who yet were, and owned themselves to be men subject to error. Yea, the Church of *Rome*, and even the Council of *Trent*, who pretend to infallibility, do also deliver all the Books we receive; but we have no more reason to believe them for this pretence, than we should have to believe certainly all that man shall say, who hath the confidence to declare his tongue not liable to utter falshood, when we can certainly know this very speech cannot be truth.

3. There is nothing else in these Paragraphs which hath not been before answered, saving what he objects concerning the differences amongst Protestants, which do not conclude Scripture which is our Rule, either uncertain, or not sufficiently clear. For there are many things which many men over

over eagerly inquire after, and too rashly determine, which, it may be, God did not think fit to determine in his word, though all things requisite and necessary are clear enough; and there are many things clear enough in the Scripture, to diligent inquirers, whilst some err about them by too hastily closing with some conceptions of their own, not grounded on sufficient evidence, and then too passionately promoting of them: and in neither of these cases the Rule is to be blamed, but the persons; and to one of these heads belong all our differences. This same Argument was urged both by *Jews* and Heathens, (and particularly by *Celsus* against Christian Religion) as is related by *Clem. Alex. Strom. 7. & Orig. lib. 3. cont. Celf.* who pleaded that Christian Religion was not to be heeded and believed, because they who professed it, differed so much from each other, or opposed, contradicted and blamed each other, and many Heresies were spread amongst them. To which they returned answer, That such differences were common in all cases, where men entertained any thing by their judgments, if the things were any way eminent and excellent: such there was amongst Philosophers who were *Gentiles*, and such amongst the followers of *Judaism*; so that he who would close with this Argument, must reject all ways of knowledge and professions of Religion. They observed likewise, that men will not refuse all Physick, because amongst Physicians there are many various opinions; nor will Travellers refuse to go in the Kings High-way, because some went out of this Road-way to by-paths, which bring them to Precipices; nor should we for this reject the Scriptures and Christian Religion, but more diligently seek into them, since it is foretold, that there must be *Heresies*, and that the *Tares* will be with the *Wheat*. To this purpose those Fathers answered for Christianity; and the same answer pleads for us. But if this Author do indeed believe, that there cannot be evidence enough in that Rule, where they who profess to follow it, are of different opinions; let him begin at home, and

put

put it into practice; and it will ingage those of the *Romish* Communion to renounce their *Rule of Faith*; since it is plainly evident, that there have been many different opinions, and high animosities amongst the pretended followers of that Rule; not only formerly amongst the followers of different School-men, and their different Orders of the Clergy; but also more of late amongst the Jesuits, and the Priests of other Orders, more especially the *Jansenists*; and the same continue to this day.

4. To all this I shall add, that if by reason of the things objected by this Authour, the Scripture be not now sufficient to justifie him in his belief, who shall receive it as a Rule; then by the same reason were the *Beræans* to be condemned, who searched the Scriptures to examine the Apostles Doctrine, for which S. *Luke* commends them, *Act.* 17. 11. Nor could they justifie *Timothy's receiving them from a Child*; yet S. *Paul* commends that in him, and sayes, *they were able to make him wise unto Salvation*, 1 Tim. 3. 15. For as they could have no more self-evidence of Scripture than we have; so they received these Scriptures from men whom themselves believed to be fallible; for the Scriptures they received as delivered by the *Jewish* Church, which if they had not judged fallible, they could not have given heed to the Apostles Doctrine, which condemned much which was delivered by the *Jews*, and delivered other Doctrines by them not received. Yea, they must conclude the delivery amongst the *Jews* certainly false, when they believed the Apostolical preaching. And even these *Jews* who delivered these Scriptures, did differ from each other, and condemn each other; which is evident not only in observing the three great Sects of the *Jews*, the *Pharisees*, *Essens*, and *Sadduces*; but also in observing the dissentions, betwixt the followers of the two great *Jewish* Doctors, *Hillel* and *Shammai*, who opposed one another to the death, even about the times of the Apostles. So that according to this Authors Principles he lays down, this was a senseless proceeding of *Timothy* and the *Beræans*, and

and they were no way justifiable. Nor can this Author plead that these persons received the Scriptures from the delivery of the professors of Christianity as such, though they supposed them also fallible in trying their Doctrines, since it is evident they closed with the truth of Christianity, by *searching the Scriptures*: and indeed even then there were great contentions amongst the professors of Christian Religion, as appears in the *Acts of the Apostles*, concerning the observation of the Rites of the *Mosaical Law*.

Since therefore we certainly know that they were justifiable who received and relied on Scriptures as we do, and since his Objections to plead against us, appear no way rational, I may well assert this third Property to agree to Scripture.

Q. 3. He propounds the Fourth Property of the *Rule of Faith, to satisfie Sceptical Dissenters, and rational Doubters*; *which*, he saith, *nothing but demonstration can do, if they be true to their reason, and otherwise, their Faith it self would be a vice. But if some things here were demonstrable, yet it may be the task of a mans life, and this rational man would smile at his endeavours, who should go about to demonstrate all the difficult things here to be evidenced; That the Scriptures are the Word of God, having no real contradiction in them; that they are contained in just so many Books, and are still preserved intire; that they are rightly Translated, and that this is the sense.* 5.

I answer; If by Sceptical, be here meant only inquisitive, I have admitted this as belonging to the *Rule of Faith*; and do assert, that the most inquisitive Dissenters and rational Doubters, may be satisfied concerning Scriptures, if they be willing to attend to sufficient evidence; and be persons who desiring to have their souls saved, would readily chuse that, which shall appear the best way to God. How all these things here mentioned may be known with sufficient certainty, and by plain and natural evidence, and without spending a mans life in searching, we have shewed 6.

in answer to the former Discourse. But these things are not indeed plain demonstrations, nor are such things as are matters of fact, capable of them, but of rational testimonies and evidences, which are so clear, that there can no rational way of doubting remain, where this evidence is discerned. Doth this Authour think that no man can rationally judge himself to be the Kings natural Subject, because he can have no demonstration that he was born in *England*, or other his Dominions? will he not eat or take Physick till he can demonstrate that his Food or Physick are proper for his Stomach? either he counts a very small rational evidence a demonstration; or else daily acts in things concerning his life without it; and yet we have much greater security concerning Scripture, than a man can have in any case concerning the suitableness of his Food. If this rational man be to pass the Seas, can he have no evidence of the safety of an Harbour, by the Mariners testimony, and a long testified experience, until he can demonstrate there are neither Rocks nor Quicksands there? *Obj.* But where the soul is concerned, there is need of the highest evidence. *Ans.* There is in this case need of sufficient evidence to command assent; but if it would be folly not to receive such things as may preserve the life on sufficient evidence, it is yet greater folly not to receive such things upon sufficient evidence as may make the soul happy. S. *Austin* while a *Manichee*, as he saith, *Confes. 6. ch. 4. would have had such certainty of things not seen, as of seven and three being ten; but at length he considered, how many things he had firmly received upon other testimony; as concerning places, and men whom he had not seen, and of what Parents he was born, and therefore resolved it was reasonable to close with Scripture upon its sage-neral delivery.* But let this Author begin at home, and he will soon see demonstrations not necessary for satisfaction. The Council of *Trent*, *Can. 4. De Baptism.* anathematizeth them who shall say, Baptism is not necessary to Salvation; and *Can. 11. de Sacramentis*, requires a necessity of the Ministers

nisters intention in the Sacrament. Can this Authour direct all the members of his own Church to Demonstrations, to prove themselves Baptized, because it is a matter which concerns their souls? If he thinks the testimonies of Parents and Godfathers sufficient; yet no rational man will call this a demonstration, nor can these prove the intention of the Minister; yea, how can this Author or any other demonstrate that he was the person who was seen at such a time to be Baptized? If he will satisfie himself with the common testimonies of a sufficient number of credible persons, in a matter where they were capable of discerning truth; this indeed will be a rational assent, and more than this cannot be expected; but this is not a demonstration, but an evidence inferior in many circumstances, and those considerable ones, to the evidence we have of Scripture.

He further says, he who would know the sense of Scripture, must have great skill in Languages, Grammar, History, Logick, and Metaphysicks; that he may fully understand the phrases, scope, and things delivered. I answer, all these indeed are necessary for the full clearing some obscure and difficult Texts of Scripture; and therefore some such places may possibly not be yet fully understood; and if they be, it is only by persons who have all these advantages, or by others from them. But about the plain and necessary things in Scripture, there is need of no more of these helps, than such as are natural to every mans understanding. He who shall assert *Grammar, Criticisms*, &c. universally necessary to help men rightly to understand plain words; such as in most places are the *Gospels* and *Epistles*, and many other parts of Scripture, must assert, That one man cannot understand another, nor a child his Father, until he have learned several *Sciences*; and so all delivery of words amongst the Vulgar, and therewith the *Romish Oral Tradition*, must be utterly impossible, to come down in any thing, so much as one step, either right or wrong, so as to be perceptible.

8. But he saith, *his Sceptick may find somewhat to reply rationally, or at least, may maintain his ground of suspense, with a, Might it not be otherwise?* If he may do so, is this any fault in the *Rule of Faith*? or any excuse to him to suspend his *assent*, when he can make no rational exception? Were not the Miracles of *Moses* sufficiently convictive, so long as some *Egyptians* said, Might they not be otherwise than from God? and was not all that Christ did and spake, enough to declare his Doctrine to be from *God*, and a *Rule of Faith*, because the *Jews* not only said, May it not be otherwise, but that it is otherwise? and must the *Rule of Faith* now be needs made another thing by us, from what it was made in the beginning by *Christ* himself? shall the *Scripture* now be required to have that condition of a *Rule of Faith*, which it is certain did not at the beginning of Christianity belong to the *Rule of Faith*?

9. If this satisfie not, suppose amongst the *Bereans* in S. *Paul*'s time, there should have been, or were some, of this Authors principles, who thought Faith a Vice, if not founded on demonstration, and would smile at any man, who should talk of demonstrating so much of *Scripture* as was requisite to found their belief in it, and so should refuse to assent to, and believe S. *Paul*, when others searching the Scriptures, did believe: Will this Author so own these *principles* of this Discourse, to say that these *sceptical Unbelievers* acted more rationally, than S. *Paul*'s Converts? and that they who believed his Doctrine by searching the *Scriptures*, did betray their reason, and their Faith was a Vice, when S. *Luke* owned them of a noble Spirit, and declared them to have searched diligently?

10. §. 4. He comes to the fifth property, that it is *convictive of the most obstinate and acute Adversaries*. Though *obstinate* persons are capable of no conviction, yet we acknowledge, that the *Rule of Faith* is defensible against all opposition; and is such, that the most acute Adversaries may be satisfied concerning it, if sufficient evidence will prevail with them. And this we assert concerning Scripture.

Scripture. He now supposeth a *Deist* to enquire, How we know the Book of Scripture to be Gods Word? and supposeth us to answer, By its excellencies. These excellencies indeed give considerable evidence, especially, as he saith, to eyes enlightned by faith; and do further strengthen and satisfie them; yet we need not, nor do not assert, this alone sufficient to give a rational account to all men, without taking in how these Books were received, and delivered in the *Church*, as we formerly shewed.

But he saith, *his Deist will shew you Texts against known science, and in his judgement, contradictions.* Will he shew *Texts* against *known science?* but what if he cannot? and what if some expressions in *Scripture* are more suited to vulgar apprehensions than the *Scholists notion*, shall any reject so excellent a Writing, because it condescends to speak intelligibly to the lowest capacities? Nor where there is proof given of this being *Gods Word*, can seeming *contradictions* to his judgment be sufficient not to receive it; since somewhat mysterious and sublime may come from God; and to understand aright all things written by the *Penmen* of *Scripture*, it is requisite to be acquainted with the circumstances of *History*, measures, proverbial expressions, and the like; and then he might reconcile, as learned men have done, many things which now to him seem contrary. 11.

But he saith, his *Deist will shew you many absurdities and Heresies in the letter of Scripture, as that God hath hands, feet, and passions like ours.* Here, as his former words are unsavoury, his latter are untrue. Scripture speaks indeed of Gods hands and feet, but no where saith, he had such like ours. Such things as are thus spoken of God in Scripture, have a true *literal* sense, if that may be called *literal*, which is *tropical*; and why may not Scripture be allowed to make use of *Tropes* or *Metaphorical expressions*, as well as all other Writers, and all Discoursers? where the sense is easily discernable to reason, which is requisite to be used, that we may understand any Writing. Now the 12.

considering;

considering what knowledge we have of God by reason, and the pondering other places of *Scripture*, which plainly speak God to be a Spirit; and considering likewise, how these words of *hands* and *feet*, *&c.* are oft used in a *figurative* sense: this will plainly convince, that they must be understood so, when they are applied to God. When the *Romanists* by *Tradition* deliver, that the *Pope* is the *Head* of the *Church*, will they not expect, that mans common reason, and what they otherwise teach of the *Church*, should teach all to allow a *tropical* sense of the word *Head*, and not that they should forthwith imagine, that that *Church* whereof the *Pope* is the *Head*, should have the outward shape of Man, Woman or Beast? Thus *Celsus*, whose Arguments against Christianity, were much of the nature of this Discoursers, makes this an Objection against Christians, that they speak unworthily of *God*; as of the work of his *hands*, the *mouth* of God, and the *voice* of God. And *Origen*, *lib. 6. cont. Celf.* thought it sufficient to answer, that *Christians did understand all these in a spiritual, not a corporeal sense; and that if* Celsus *had read other places of Scripture, he might thence know, that Christians would not think otherwise of God.* It is an unchristian assertion, to charge the letter of the Scripture (which is the very words of the God of Truth) with heresie, where we have sure ground of it's interpretation, both from other Scripture, & from Reason.

13. Against the latter he objects, that then we disown the *Scripture Rule, and make our Reason and other knowledge our Rule:* I answer, when we include *Scripture*, we cannot disown it; yet withal, we own *Reason*, as that whereby we judge of the significancy of Words and Phrases, as well in Scripture as elsewhere: he who doth not this, either doth not understand Phrases, or hath a prodigious art of understanding without reason. Yea, we do profess, to make use of that knowledge we have of God by Reason, thereby to understand the better other expressions which concern God in Truths revealed; since we are certain, that God gave the Scriptures, as a further revelation to man,

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who was supposed to have that Reason and Conscience which God had endued him with.

But he further in ℣. 5. challengeth the *consciousness of our own thoughts, whether we do not bring thoughts along with us to interpret Scripture by, and these from Tradition, or what we have heard and received.* Here I shall give him a true and faithful account of the Protestants carriage in this thing, which must be by a distinction of Persons and Texts of Scripture. In such Texts as appear plain where the necessary truths are contained, none of us bring any such thoughts to interpret by, but discern the evidence plainly in it self, and from thence we hold such Truths as Points of Faith. In Texts of Scripture which appear more difficult, all Protestants do prepossess themselves with such truths as they have learned by plain Scriptures, or other certain evidence, and therefore know no difficult Text can be so interpreted, as to contradict any such truth. Here the vulgar Christians do suppose many times that to be the true sense of such places, which they have received from those they judge able and faithful; but such a sense of such Scripture, they do not own as a necessary Point of Faith, but admit it as most probable, untill themselves be able fully to search; and then if they discern this a true exposition, they will receive it upon their own knowledge; but if they find it a mistake, they will lay down that former apprehension, and will entirely be guided by what they see is the true sense of Scripture. And persons of great abilities to make the best search into the sense of more difficult Texts, do not prepossess themselves with any particular sense of such Scripture, but are every where entirely guided by that which appears the best evidence to recommend any sense, as knowing that it is not our interest or benefit, that this or that opinion or interpretation should be true in things doubtful; but our great concernment is to own that which is, and God hath declared to be, the Truth. 14.

℣. 66.

15. §. 6. He enquires how we can demonstrate *concerning any place of Scripture, that it is not altered, and that* [not] *is not inserted or left out?* I answer, this as to any matters of Faith is discovered sufficiently by what we shewed to prove the Scriptures preserved entire in the foregoing Discourse. Yea, the common principles of Reason and Conscience in man, will evidence to him in many necessary truths, that if [*not*] was left out or put in, they could never have been from God. That God is Eternal, Powerful, Good, and to be worshipped of his creatures, that he treats man with great mercy, that men must be holy and righteous, that God will judge the World; such things as these appear so evident, that man where-ever he hears them, cannot but acknowledge them to be true and from God, and that the contrary cannot be so. But further, the consent of all Copies in several Countreys, is in this case an abundant rational evidence; especially considering, that these Writings were dispersed into all Countreys presently after they were first written, and so no miscarriage in the Faith could be in those first Copies taken from the Original, (of what this Author moves his doubts) which would not have been easily discovered and reformed, either by the surviving Apostles, or by the Original Writing or *Autographa* of the Apostles and Evangelists; which doubtless being of such high esteem in the Church, were some time preserved. Now since at the first dispersing of these Copies, they did contain the Apostles Doctrine entire, the constant agreement of all Copies sufficiently prove the same continued still; especially considering, that the Copies which all appear to have this agreement, were written in several Ages long since past, and in several Countreys. And that to imagine [*not*] left out or foisted in, in the matters of Faith, in all Books generally and publickly and daily read by Christians, must suppose 1. That they all every where in so many Countreys, should conspire to falsifie the Faith of *Jesus*, which they appeared to value above their lives, and by this Tradition would be corrupted;

corrupted; but yet Scripture in all these Books could not, unless 2. They should falsifie all the ancient Copies, which yet by the very writing appear to have nothing rased out, or foisted in. And this is a much higher certainty, than *Josiah* could have of his own Copy; yea, than can be had of any passage in any Historian, ancient Law or Record; and if this we have said, did not generally satisfie the Cavils propounded, all History, old Laws and Records, must be rejected, because there can be no such appearance of so great evidence, that in any sentence [*not*] was not left out or foisted in. And so all matters of Fame or Tradition must be disbelieved, till he can demonstrate, that they had not their original from the reading some Writings, which have the same liableness to mistake with other Writings, and that [*not*] hath not been put in or left out in the Oral delivery. And how much his Reader will be beholden to him for such conceits as these, we may gather from his own words, *Disc.* 9. *q.* 4. *where speaking of humane testimonies, he tells us amongst the most extravagant Opinionasters, none was ever found so frantick, as to doubt them; and should any do so, all sober mankind would esteem them stark mad.* But as hath been proved, this Author would here lead his Reader such a way, as himself saith, all sober mankind will esteem him mad, if he follow him. If this be not enough, I shall add, that the Primitive Christians owned such a tryal of Scriptures incorruptness, as fully sufficient for them to rely on, and to confound all who opposed it. And even this Argument of this Author, though urged with greater confidence, was that with which several of the Hereticks, from the time of *Irenæus* and *Tertullian* to S. *Austin*, opposed the Christians; amongst which I shall now only mention the *Manichees* out of S. *Austin* who declares, that whilst he was a *Manichee*, *Confess. l.* 5. *c.* 2. he was somewhat shaken by hearing a dispute between *Helpidius* and the *Manichees*: but the *Manichees* afterwad privately told him, The N. Testament was corrupted, and there was no uncorrupt exemplar produced; but this did as little

satisfie him. And after he became an opposer of the *Manichees. Contra Faustum, lib.* 11. *c.* 1. he urgeth against them Scripture testimony; to which *Faustus* answers, *That this Scripture testimony was not right.* To which Saint *Austin* replies, *If this answer be esteemed of any weight, what written Authority can ever be opened? what holy Book can ever be searched? cap.* 2. he demands proof of *Faustus*, what Books ever read otherwise, and *c.* 3. urges, *All Books new and old have this testimony, all Churches read it, all tongues consent in it, therefore put off the cloak of deceitfulness.* And in *Epist.* 19. he saith, *he read the Scripture which is placed in the most sublime and celestial height of Authority, being certain and secure of its truth:* but (saith he) *the Manichees contend that many things in the Scripture are false;* yet so, that they do not ascribe falshood to the Apostles who wrote them, but to some which have corrupted the Books: but because they cannot prove this by any ancient Copies, he saith they are overcome, and confounded by the most manifest truth.

16. But our Discourser saith, *It is certain there are many various readings, yea, so many in the New Testament alone, observed by my Lord* Usher, *that he durst not print them, for fear of bringing the whole Book into doubt.* We acknowledge there are several various readings; but this speaks the greater security of this Rule, because though all these readings are preserved, yet according to any of them, there is a consent in all the matters of Faith; unless there be some manifest mistake in any Copy, which may easily be discerned to be the Scribes or Printers error: nor amongst all these readings, can any point of Christian Faith be so doubted of, that it is not capable of receiving sufficient evidence from some Texts. And though this Authour would pretend, that from these various readings, there is an uncertainty in all things in Scripture, which is contrary to all reason; yet others more knowing and learned Papists, are so ingenuous as to grant what I here contend for. *Bellarmine de Verbo Dei lib.* 2. *c.* 2. asserts, that the errors of Transcri-

Tranſcribers in the Old Teſtament, are not of ſo great moment, that the integrity of the Holy Scriptures ſhould be wanting, in thoſe things which belong to Faith and Good Manners: *for the moſt part* (ſaith he) *the whole difference of the various readings, is placed in ſome little words, which either do not at all*, or *do very little alter the ſenſe.* And *ch.* 7. he declares, that he aſſerts the ſame concerning the New Teſtament, which he there aſſerted concerning the Old. Indeed before the time of Chriſt, there were more various readings in the *Old Teſtament*, than there now is in the *New*; as may appear not only from the various *Cheri* and *Ketib*, and the *Tikkan Sopherim*, and ſuch like, which are probably more ancient; but alſo becauſe the Copies uſed by the *Septuagint* and *Samaritan*, differed in many various readings from the *Hebrew Copies* uſed by the *Chaldee Paraphraſt*, which probably were moſt in uſe in Chriſt's time, and after received by the *Maſoreths*; and yet ſince they all agreed in the ſame points of Doctrine; Chriſt and his Apoſtles both had recourſe to them, and ſo perſwaded others: and we think it is ſafe for us to follow ſuch examples. The Vulgar may here conſider our ſeveral *Engliſh Tranſlations*, which as to expreſſions have in moſt Verſes ſome difference, and in ſome few places the one may give a ſenſe ſomewhat different from the other; yet ſince it is but in very few places where they do not all agree in the ſence of the place; and where they do not, yet none of them do aſſert any truth of Doctrine which the others either do not aſſert, or do deny; the common Chriſtians may hence ſee that which may make them rather the more ſecure than doubtful of theſe truths, becauſe the latter *Tranſlations*, though differing in words, yet agree in all Doctrines with the former. And if there be the ſame variety of readings in ſeveral *Tranſlations* in other Languages, this is no more than is in our *Engliſh*. But as for the *Originals*, though there be ſeveral various readings, yet in compariſon of our *Engliſh Tranſlations*, but one for many; and yet fewer places where the ſame ſenſe

of that *Text* is not expressed by such readings, though in some small difference of words; which difference of words was occasioned partly from several of the *Fathers* citing the Scriptures, as is with all men frequent, not alwayes in the very same words, but words of the same sense; from whence many of these various readings in the *New Testament* had their Original; or partly that the *Scribes*, or they who copied the Scriptures, might have some mistake, where yet the sense remained intire for the most part.

17. But he inquires, Why may there not have *been some various readings formerly, in those places which now appear in all Copies we have to agree? which various readings may possibly have been blindly determined, and so misguide us in the main points of Faith.* I answer, That since there are very many ancient *Copies*, and *Commentators* and *Citations* of *Fathers*, which fully accord with our present readings; and since there are some ancient *Translations*, as *Syriack*, *Latine*, and others; all which agree in the same, and since there is an accord in these Books scattered and dispersed over the whole World: if there had been any such different readings, they must be every where determined, before these ancient *Copies*, *Commentaries* or *Citations* were written, before the ancient *Translations* were made, yea, before the *Copies* of the Scriptures were dispersed into the several Regions of the World: and this is to imagine that there must have been some general alteration determined, in the great matters of Faith, whilst the hand writing of the *Apostles* was preserved, yea, even in the *Apostles* daies, which is impossible unless the *Apostles* to whom Christ committed his truth, and their Converts who were numerous, and prized this Doctrine above all the World, should all against the clear evidence of their own knowledge, and the Original Writings of the Apostles then amongst them, conspire to corrupt this Doctrine, and to falsifie the *Records* which contain it; which to assert, is not only highly unreasonable, but exceedingly impious and

and blasphemous, nor would it leave Oral Tradition safe.

How much all this speaks to common sense, I shall express in a case which is very parallel. Suppose a Jury in any case of concernment, should observe an hundred Witnesses produced, examined asunder, and every one of their attestations written, and one by one read to them; as to the great matter to be proved, every one of them agree fully, and not so much as one dissents: will they not judge this a sufficient evidence of any thing spoken, though in some of these attestations, there be some small difference in a word, though not at all to add or leave out any considerable sense? yea, Will they not think, the testimony the more firm as to the things attested, because they all agree firmly in them, though they never met together to conspire so to correct one another, that there might not be a syllable different in their words. The Scripture certainty of points of Faith, is much greater than this, since the Copies, every one of which gives its attestation, are abundantly more numerous; and withal the main points of Faith are not only expressed in some one Text of Scripture, but in very many places, where there is a concurrence in all these Copies; which speaks these truths more certainly free from all possibility of error. Yet besides all this certainty, we have much in the end of Scriptures writing, and therein Gods care of it to assure us that it is not corrupt: of this we spake somewhat in the former Discourse. 18.

What he speaks of *Bishop* Usher, *observing so many various readings in the New Testament, which he durst not Print for fear of bringing the whole Book into doubt.* This relation manifests it self to be such a story, as I think neither this Author, nor any man of reason, either *Protestant* or *Papist*, can believe, upon serious consideration, if he withal judge Bishop *Usher* to have been a very knowing man. No understanding *Protestant* can believe this, because he knows that *Protestants freely* inquire after various readings, and 19.

and never the more doubt of Scriptures; because there appears so full a consent in all material things. Nor can I imagine that either this Author or any understanding *Papist* can believe this story; for since it appears to be much their design, to bring the *New Testament and Old* likewise so far into question, that it might not be capable of being a Rule: if they thought in truth that *Archbishop Usher* observed so much of various readings, as would effectually do this, it cannot be doubted they would soon collect and publish such various readings, or procure some other to do it; unless they do imagine that that was observed by *Bishop Usher*, which cannot be observed by any other man. Now as their not performing this, perswades us Protestants, that the Papists themselves do not believe this story, so it discovers to us that we have no reason at all to believe it our selves.

Thus having discovered the Doubts moved by this Discourser not to be acute and convictive; we conclude that this Property notwithstanding these Doubts, doth belong to Scripture, that it is defensible against the most acute Adversaries, and there is sufficient evidence concerning it, to prevail with them.

An Answer to the fourth Discourse, *shewing, that the two last Properties of the* Rule of Faith, *do agree to Scripture.*

§. 1. THese two last Properties are *Certainty in it self, and ascertainableness to us. That the latter cannot agree to Scripture, is the subject* (he saith) *of his foregoing Discourse*, and depends upon the former, its being certain in it self. What he urged in his foregoing Discourse, I have in mine answered, and shall now examine what he writes against the certainty of Scripture. 1.

§. 2. To shew Scripture not certain in it self, he tells us, *the material Characters in Books may be burnt, torn, blotted out, or worn out, and this he calls a deep consideration; because it would be a disorderly proceeding to lay such a weak means, for so main an end as the salvation of mankind.* These are indeed but vain and empty words, which he calleth his *deep consideration.* For doth this Author imagine that there is no certainty in any other Records which are preserved, because they consist of matter capable of perishing? and where did he learn, that nothing which is not of the most unalterable nature in the World, must be made the means of mans salvation. Let this *deep Considerer* think whether after the Promise to *Abraham* of the *Messias* to come out of *Isaac*'s Seed, this Seed could not be a means for the Salvation of mankind; because *Isaac* might possibly have been killed before he had any Seed, and all his Children were mortal men; and was there not a much greater possibility then of *Isaac*'s death, before he had 2.

had any Seed, or of all his Seed after, than there now is of all the Copies of Scripture being destroyed? And may not the same be urged concerning the Seed of *David and Solomon*? Yea, so perniciously dangerous are the assertions of this Authour, that they would tempt men to reject the ever-blessed *Jesus*, as well as the Scriptures. But dare he say that the life and Ministry of our Lord Jesus could not be a means for the salvation of mankind, because he was in our nature lyable to death, and to him who only considers this nature, it might seem possible he might have died, before he had declared all Gospel-Doctrine? But this empty and vain consideration of this Author, hath its foundation, either in imagining the World without a God to order it, or at least in supposing that the means of mans salvation must have their effect from the strength of nature, and not from God, who can use the weak things of the World to confound the Mighty.

3. But the Scriptures are not so lyable to be destroyed as any thing else in nature, as this Authour falsely asserts. Was there but one Copy to be found, as it was in *Josiah*'s time? if this was in the hands of a professed enemy to Religion, there might be fear of the Scriptures being lost, if we had no eye to Divine Providence. But since there are so many millions of Copies, and the number yearly increased, and these in the hands of many thousands, who would hazard their lives to preserve them; there will appear more reason to fear, that all the generation of mankind now growing up, should perish and die before they come to their full stature, and so mankind cease, for want of propagation, than to imagine that all the Copies of Scripture should be destroyed: For as it is certain that in every generation many thousands die in their infancy, or childhood; so there can be no demonstration, nor rational proof that all shall not, unless it be by considering the Providence of God: and as a Copy of Scripture is in it self much more durable than the life of a man, as appears by many Copies written several ages since; and

these

these Copies are more capable of lying undiscovered from the eye of an enemy than a man is, who must be where he may have food to preserve him; so there is as much reason to eye or hand of Providence in preserving Scripture, as in preserving mankind. For these Scriptures never could be destroyed, when there were not such innumerable Copies, as now there are. When the *Jews* only had these Oracles of God, many learned men are of opinion, that *Manasseh*, and some that *Amon* designed the destroying all Scripture Copies, yet there was one left which was found in the Temple, and brought to *Josiah*. *Antiochus Epiphanes*, as *Josephus* relates, *Antiqu. Jud. lib.* 12. *c.* 7. made the same attempt, but could not effect it. And after Christ, the same was indeavoured by *Diocleſian*, *Euseb. Hist. Eccl. lib.* 7. 20. but such designs prevailed not, and yet *then* there was not probably one Copy of Scripture for some hundreds *now*.

Yea further, if the case should be such, that no Copy of Scripture was to be found, it is not impossible with God (who could have raised *Isaac* from the dead, if he had been slain) by extraordinary messengers to renew the Scriptures, if they were not otherwise to be had. God hath taken other care by his Providence for their preservation; yet those ancient Fathers (as *Tertullian de Habitu Muliebr. c.* 3. *Clem. Alex. Strom.* 1. *Irenæus adverſ. Hæreſ. lib.* 3. *c.* 25. and S. *Hierome*, &c.) who were of opinion that the Scriptures then written were lost at the time of the Captivity, did assert them again restored by *Ezra*. But that Position of the Scriptures then being lost, is exploded by the most learned and judicious *Papists*, such as *Baronius ad An.* 180. *Bellarmine* and others, not only as being an *Apocryphal* story, contradicted in *Neh.* 8. 1, 2. but by *Baronius* in the place cited, it is expressly declared. *not possible, that since they had at least as many Copies of Scripture as Synagogues, yet none of them should be preserved.* Much less can they now be lost, since it is not improbable that there are now as many thousands of Copies, as were then *Jewish* 4.

Synagogues. Hence we may observe that what this Authour calls his *deep consideration*, as it hath no rational foundation, so it hath not the advantage to be one of his own *Church Traditions*, and shews there may be something delivered for truth which was not so received. And of the same nature are almost all his Arguments against Scriptures being the *Rule of Faith.*

5. §. 3. He further adds, That *the material causes to conserve these Characters, are lyable to innumerable contingencies; but mans mind by its immateriality, is in part freed from Physical mutability; and here we may with reason hope for an unalterableness, and an unerasableness, if there be a due proposal, which must necessarily effect the sense.* These words are more monstrous than rational; it is as much as in plain *English* to tell his Reader, that having an immaterial soul, he can never forget any thing that he either saw or heard distinctly; and that when he hath read a Book observingly, all the words and letters may be more exactly known from him, by the impressions upon his mind, than by viewing the Printed or Written Copy it self. And yet all this will not serve his turn, unless it be supposed that these immaterial souls must alwaies continue in the World, or that what was by them received, must thence necessarily in the same manner be continued on others. Who sees not that this is as much against common sense, as if he had said, That because man hath an immaterial soul, he may flie up to the *Sun*, and *Moon*, and fixed *Stars* at his pleasure? Was Man of the nature of Angels, without his gross Body? its beyond the skill of this Authour to prove, that nothing could be forgotten or blotted out of his mind that is once known, especially considering that he is a sinner, and even the Writers of his own Church do conceive, that sinning Angels lost much knowledge by their sin. But man is a Creature of another mold, and letters and words, and things are preserved in his memory, by material impressions and every man knows they may be forgiven; yea, this Authour in this Book oft forgets and contradicts

tradicts himself. Do not all mankind appear sufficiently convinced, that words or characters are more surely preserved in paper, or writing than in mens memories, in that what they would have faithfully kept, they commit to writing, and enter it upon Record? Had the *Jews* been of this *Authours* opinion, they would not have desired *Ezra* to have read the *Law* of *Moses* out of a Book, *Neh.* 8. 1. but to have spoken it out of the impressions of his own mind: yet he would have been a more safe deliverer of *Moses*, than the *Church* of *Rome* can shew for other Scripture. Yea, it is plain and self-evident, that the *Church* of *Rome* agree with the rest of mankind, to acknowledge writing upon some material subject, a more sure way of preservation of things than the minds of men; for they write the Acts of their Councils, and Statutes of their Societies, and yet these things are as much (or more) spoken of amongst them, as the Scriptures are, and so more like to be preserved in their immaterial minds; yea, they write or print their Creed, Prayers, Lessons, and their whole Liturgy, and have them read in their Churches; when by this Authors Argument, the best way to have these things preserved intire, is to have them uttered from the memories of the Priests and others in the Church; and not to mind the Writing or Printing at all, as not being in it self certain. The *Roman Church* know that mens minds are slippery, and apt to forget something in their Liturgy, if it were not written; and that others would take the boldness to alter it, and vary from it, if they had no written Rule: and shall writing be the best preservative for all other things, and not for the words of the Scriptures, and the truths therein contained? I remember *Salmeron*, tho' a *Jesuit*, hath among the rest of his *prolegemena*, one which is *Proleg.* 25. *Why the Scriptures were written? and he declares* (as every one who designs to speak truth would do) *that it was that thence men may most surely know truth, whereas the memories of men are very slippery and uncertain:* and S. *Austin* assigns a like cause of the Original of Letters, *de*

*Doctr. Christiana, lib.*2.*c.*4. Nor can I imagine for what end the *Church of Rome* prints Copies of the Bible, if they did not think that by those printed Copies, the Scriptures might be known and preserved.

6. And as if it was not sufficient absurdity without any colour of solid reason to contradict the experience of all civiliz'd Nations; he at once opposeth even the wisdom of God himself also, who commanded the *King* of *Israel* to *write him a Copy of the Law in a Book, and read therein all the daies of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God*, Deut. 17. 19, 20. Yea, he commands *Moses* to *write for a memorial in a Book*, Exod. 17. 14. Yea, *Isaiah* is commanded, *Isai.* 30. 8. *Write it before them in a Table, and note it in a Book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever.* And though God himself declares this the way of keeping the memorial of things; this Authour rejects this way, and closeth with the uncertain way of mans frail memory.

7. §. 4. He tells us, That as *there are some simple vulgar actions unmistakeable, yet there are compound actions, as the transcribing of a whole Book, consisting of myriads of words, single letters and stopps, and the several actions over each of these are so short and cursory, that humane diligence cannot attend to every of them.* Yet, he grants; *that this may be done with care enough, if there be diligent Examiners.* This Objection speaks against the common sense of every one who can write; for it tells him that no man can possibly keep to the sense or words he intends in writing a Letter, or such like, though he hath a Copy before him. For he who can write a page with due care, may by the continuance of the same diligence, write a sheet; and if he want nothing else, but what concerns his writing, he may with the same care write a Book. What extraordinary art hath this Discourser, that he could write his Book intelligibly, and the Printers print it so? can none do the like? He cannot be ignorant that these things may be done by common diligence; and all men who understand writing acknow-

acknowledge that Deeds and all Records may be exemplified, and faithfully tranſcribed, if there be had due care about it. That there hath been ſuch care about Scripture; I ſhall ſhew in anſwer to his next Paragraph. And I ſuppoſe he is not ſo ſelf-conceited as to think, that other men may not uſe as much care in writing Letters or Words, as himſelf doth or can.

But if this little Argument of many little actions not being capable of due attention, was conſiderable, it would concern this *Authour* to find a way, how the *Papiſts* may know the definitions of the *Council of Trent*, eſpecially ſuch a way as he intimates, *p.* 211. it is not hard for *Proteſtants* to find. For to run to the Printed Books which contain the *Acts* and *Canons* of that *Council*, here preſently appears the multitude of little actions both in the Printing and firſt Copying. If he ſhall tell us, they receive the *Canons* of that *Council*, or any other, not as they are in Books, but by *Oral Tradition*; I ſhall then examine whether there be not the ſame and greater difficulty about ſuch *Tradition*. For it is certain, that there are as many miſtakeable little actions in ſpeaking a word as in writing it; every tittle requiring the pauſe in the voice, and every letter pronounced, being a diſtinct framing of the Organs of Speech: and both experience and reaſon will tell a man, that he may more frequently miſtake in ſpeaking a word, than in more leiſurely writing it by a Copy; ſince ſpeech is more quick, and admits not of ſo long conſideration, for every little action as writing doth, and every man knows that where there are many phraſes and ſentences, there may be ſomewhat ſooner omitted in ſpeaking where he hath no outward help for his memory, than in tranſcribing, where the memory is perfectly relieved by the Copy before him. So that in the way of *Oral Tradition*, beſides the ſeveral little actions of the Organs of Speech, there are other little actions of the Memory, more lyable to the error, than the eye is in viewing a Copy. Hence it will appear, that this Authors perſwading men in this

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§. 4. to account Scripture not to be certain in it self, is built upon this foundation, That God hath not indowed man with so much wisdom and discretion, as to guide his speech, or hand so, as to speak or write intelligibly, or according to his meaning or intention. And this is as much as to say, That men cannot converse with one another, and that no truth can be delivered from one to another, no nor falshood neither; and he who will be perswaded to this, will not be a *Protestant*, nor a *Papist*; neither a man of any Religion, nor of any Reason.

9. §. 5. He tells us, *If it were certain that there was care taken for the faithful transcribing the Scripture, much might be said thence for its certainty: but as it is capable of many mistakes, so especially in the* New Testament, *experience testifies there hath been no such diligence, by the divers readings of the several Copies, and thousands of corrections of the* Vulgar edition. His Objection to disprove the use of care, especially in the *New Testament*, must be first answered, and then we shall evidence that there hath been abundant care. What he speaks of the *Vulgar Latin*, which is the *Translation* in request in the *Romish Church*, and made use of by many others; the thousands of corrections he mentions, speaks that *Church* none of the best preservers of Records, But after all these corrections, was there any point of Faith or Manners, wherein after the corrections, it differed from what it was before the corrections? if it differed in none, then such various readings do not declare the Scriptures even in *that Translation*, in any thing to misguide, in discovering whatever concerns Faith or holy life, though such *various readings* should remain. But if the *Vulgar edition* did differ in any such matter of Faith, or holy life, this would condemn the *Roman Churches Tradition*, which hath professed to own and receive what ever was in the *Vulgar*, both before its correction and since; and so must differ from what it was, in that point of Faith or Manners. Touching various readings in the *Original Copies*, and almost all, if not all *Translations*, it is evident

vident there is no difference in any point of Doctrine, nor considerable in words and phrases. And though it be impossible to prove concerning every single Copy, that it was faithfully transcribed, by giving an account of the manner how it was done: yet there remains an abundant rational proof, that the *Copies* of the Scripture, and particularly of the *New Testament*, have been generally written with much fidelity; because the several Copies which may yet be seen, written in several Countries and in divers Ages, shew such an agreement in them all, and in the Ancients citations of them, that they speak one thing, the same truth, and with so very little variation of any word, that to a diligent attender, this speaks much of care, attention and diligence in transcribing. To all this I add, that it is certain that the *Ancients* were very industriously accurate in their transcribing Books, and made it a great point of conscience to be attentive in it, even in other Books, and no doubt more especially, about the holy Scriptures, and did to their *Copies*, subscribe their Names, that it might be known by whom they were written. What exact diligence the *Ancients* used in transcribing Books, may be observed from an instance, related by *Eusebius*, *Eccles. Hist. lib.* 5. *c.* 20. concerning a Book of *Irenæus*, at the end of which *Irenæus* wrote thus: *I adjure thee who shalt transcribe this Book, by our Lord Jesus Christ, and by his glorious presence when he cometh to judge the quick and the dead, that thou compare what thou shalt transcribe, and amend it diligently, according to this Copy, whence thou shalt transcribe it, and that thou shalt likewise transcribe this Oath, and put it in thy Copy.* And this, he saith, he thought profitable to put in his History, that in this thing they might have example of the care and diligence of those ancient and truly holy men. If such care was to be taken of *Irenæus*'s Works, surely no less of the holy and Divine Writings.

§. 6. He goes about to shew, *That Scripture cannot be certain as to its sense especially, to the Vulgar, where he repeats, that Arts and Sciences are necessary to understand the Letter*; 10.

which

which was before said by him, and is above answered, *Disc.* 3. §. 7. and need not here be repeated. He further tells us, That *an acute Scholar can blunder the conceptions of the Vulgar concerning Scripture, and give them a seeming clearer interpretation of his own.* In many points of Controversie and difficult Texts, we acknowledge *a Scholar* may do so; but it is no way necessary that the *Vulgar* should be able to determine them, and be firmly setled in the knowledge of them; but in matters of Faith more plainly discovered, it is otherwise. If he thinks they may be perswaded by a *Scholar* to think any other sense more clear, than that which offers it self, and is obvious in such phrases as these; That *Jesus* is the *Christ*; *that he was born of the Virgin*, and *died for us*, and such like; he must find men of much lower capacities than *Protestants* are, and indeed such as cannot understand the meaning of what that *Scholar* shall speak, (since he cannot speak plainer words) and then I know not how they can be perverted by him: yea, such men are not so much as capable of being instructed at all in the knowledge of Faith, or matters of mere belief, unless this Author can discover some other way of instruction in these things, than by plain words. But doth not this cavil strike at all wayes of knowledge, and even at *Tradition* as much as *Scripture?* For if the plain words of Scripture may be perverted by a *Scholar*, are not the words delivered by *Tradition* capable of being in the same manner perverted? If not, it must either be because the same words written or read, cannot have so plain a sense, as when they are spoken without reference to any Book; or else the Teachers of the *Romish Church* must be thought wiser than the *Spirit* of *God* and the *Apostles*, in that they can speak the plain truths of God better, and with less lyableness to mistake, than the *Apostles* wrote, who yet professed to use plainness.

11. But he asks, *when we see* Protestants *and* Socinians *making use, as they conceive, of the best advantages the letter gives them, yet differ in so main points as of the Trinity, and*

of

of Christs Divinity; *what certainty can we promise to weaker heads?* I answer, weaker heads may well enough be satisfied with that evidence, which men of greater parts through prejudice do not entertain. In the beginning of *Christianity*, the wise men of the World who pretended to be guided by the best evidence, did not all agree in so main a point, as which was the true Religion, whether *Christianity*, *Judaism*, or *Gentilism*: will it thence follow that there was no expecting that men of ordinary capacities should discern evidence enough to perswade them to be *Christians*, and that there was no rational hopes of their conversion, though many thousands of them believed? Or in the matter now in hand? can he imagine that until all learned men of *Protestants* and *Papists* are agreed, in so main a point as which is the *Rule of Faith*, no ordinary capacities can he satisfied concerning this Rule upon any solid grounds? I am confident himself doth not think so, and *Protestants* are fully certain of the contrary. In like manner, Protestants in general, even the Vulgar, appear fully satisfied about the *Trinity*, *and the Divinity* of *Christ*, from the evidence which Scripture gives to these great truths: yea, so plain are they in Scripture, that he must be acute in devising waies to evade the evidence of these truths, who doth not receive them: nor can we think that the *Socinians* could either deny these truths, or entertain their own way of interpretation, if it was not that these truths are above the reason of man to comprehend; (as it is rational to imagine much is, which concerns the Infinite Divine Being) and that they do too much magnifie reason, in not receiving any thing which reason cannot conceive how it is or may be: and so in truth it is not their making Scripture the *Rule of Faith*; but rather in these points, the setting up another Rule, and making Scripture the thing ruled, which is the cause of their not owning these truths.

Having now answered all his Objections, and vindicated Scripture from all his Cavils; I may conclude that THE SCRIPTURE HATH ALL THE FOREMENTIONED PROPERTIES BELONGING TO THE RULE OF FAITH.

After this §. 7. *he excuseth himself, as not having spoken this against Scripture upon his own principles, but that all he hath spoken* (as he saith, but I have shewed the contrary) *follows upon the Protestants principles.* This speaks him to act a part in the disgracing Scripture, which he is ashamed to own; and therefore he here acknowledges high excellencies in these sacred Oracles. For if he indeed think, there can be no certainty of Scriptures being the Word of God, and of the *Canon* of *Scripture* from the *Churches* delivery; and of the uncorruptness of it as to Faith, from the agreement of *ancient Copies*, then he must without dissimulation profess, that upon his own Principles all those imperfections are attributed to Scripture: since the *Papists*, yea the *Popes* themselves have acknowledged, that they have none other way to be assured of these things by; and reason will evidence they can have none other, which the *Protestants* cannot have as well as they. But if he thinks there be any certainty in these proofs, he must acknowledge that *Protestants* who own these proofs, have this certainty.

13. But he saith, all he designs is, *That Scripture is most improper for a* Rule of Faith, *and was never intended for such; as may be evinced, because the Apostles and their Successors, went not with Books in their hands, to deliver Christs Doctrine, but with words in their mouths; whence* Primitive Antiquity *learnt their Faith before those Books were universally spread among the Vulgar, much less the Catalogue acknowledged.* What he speaks of the Apostles not having Books in their hands, either refers to the Books of the Old Testament or of the New. As to the Old Testament, 'tis certain, that both Christ and the Apostles sometimes had them in their hands, and, which is most considerable, had them ordina-

ordinarily in their mouths, to declare from thence the Doctrine of Christ. Thus Christ *beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself*, Luke 24. 27. And S. *Paul*, Acts 17. 2, 3. *reasoned out of the Scriptures, opening and alledging*; and *Apollos*, Act. 18. 28. *convinced the Jews, shewing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ*; which being in the *Synagogue* it is not much to be questioned but they had with them the Books of the Scripture, as was the manner of the *Jews* teaching, as we read 2 *Chron.* 17. 9. *they taught in Judah, and had the Book of the Law of the Lord with them.* And had not *Philip* the Book of the Prophet which he expounded when he converted the *Eunuch?* But possibly he meant they had not the Books of the New Testament in their hands. Indeed before they were written, they could not have them, nor could they then be a Rule. However the Apostles and Evangelists testimony was then and now is the Rule to know what was delivered by Christ; but their testimony by Speech was temporary, and could not remain after their death; while this continued it was a *Rule of Faith:* but they also had another way of testimony, which was by Writing, and this as it continues with us, is to us a *Rule of Faith*, because their testimony; and so S. *John* calls his Gospel his testimony, *Joh.* 21. 24. and Saint *Peter* speaks to the same purpose of his Epistle, 1 *Pet.* 5. 12. What he speaks of the Apostles and their Successors, not having their Writings in their hands after they were written, is a gross falshood, as will more plainly appear, from what in the end of this Book may be observed from several Authorities of the Ancient Fathers. Yea, S. *Paul* and *Barnabas*, with other *Apostolical men*, went to preach to the *Gentiles*, with the Epistle of the *Synod of Jerusalem* in their hands, *Act.* 15. 22. which was the first New Testament writing; and *Eusebius* relates, that S. *Mark* carried his written Gospel, and preached it in *Egypt*, *Hist. Eccles. lib.* 2. *c.* 11. and S. *Peter himself* made use of S. *Paul*'s Writings, and commended them, 2 *Pet.* 3. 15, 16. and

so did all the Ancient Fathers of Apostolical Writings.

14. He is bold to say, *That the Revolters from Primitive method, closed with Scripture as the Rule.* But in truth, when the World erred by *vain Tradition*, it was none other than God himself who wrote the ten Commandments, and gave the Law of *Moses*, and the Prophets, to guide the *Israelites*. And when *Pharisaism*, that great Heresie, was maintained by *Tradition*, they who laid Scripture as the Rule against it, were none other than Christ and his Apostles, who referred to the Scriptures of the *Old Testament*, and gave forth the Scriptures of the *New Testament*.

15. But he saith, *Scripture as it is made the* Rule of Faith, *is brought to the vilest degree of contempt, and every upstart Heresie fathers it self upon it.* But who contemns it? not *Protestants* who make it their Rule, and they who do will be highly guilty, as were the despisers of *Jesus*, who was also contemned and despised of men. But is this a cause of contempt, if all Heresies pretend to it? do they not all pretend to the right worshipping the true God, the true following of Christ and owning Christian Religion as well as to the Scriptures? and are these excellent things the more contemptible, because they pretend to them? yet it is false, that all Heresies have pretended to Scripture. For as some have denied Scripture as it is witnessed by *Irenæus* and *Tertullian*; as some have gone to revelation and secret wayes of delivery of Doctrine, as the same Authors shew, and the History of *Simon Magus*, *Basilides*, *Marcion*, *Manes* and others evidence: so others have pretended to the publick Church-Tradition, continued to their time. Thus did the Heresie of *Artemon in Eus. Hist. Eccles. lib.* 5. *c.* 27. who declared, *That Christ was only man, and their Ancestors* (they said) *had declared this unto them, to be not only that which the Apostles received from the Lord, but that which they generally taught, and was continued until the times of* Victor; and that *Zephyrinus*

rinus (who succeeded *Victor* at *Rome*, and in whose time these Hereticks lived) *corrupted this teaching*. It seems this Heresie had numerous followers or Attestors, in that it is there said in *Eusebius*, *it might have had much probability, if it had not been contradicted by the Scriptures, and the Writings of the Ancient Brethren.* Yea, these very Hereticks did indeavour to alter and corrupt the Scriptures, so far they were from making them a Rule.

He further sayes, *The many Sects in* England *flow from this Principle of Scripture being a* Rule of Faith; *and it is a wonder this doth not oblige men to renounce that Principle which is the necessary Parent of such disorders.* This hath been answered, *Disc.* 3. *n.* 3, 4. so far as concerns difference of opinions. But that all the *Sects* in *England* do arise from this opinion of the Scriptures being the *Rule of Faith*, is very far from truth: for First, it is certain that some of these *Sects* do not profess it to be their Rule; I suppose he knows there are some of his perswasion, that make *Tradition* their Rule, and he knows there are others who pretend to be guided by the *Light within* them; and the way of redressing these *Sects* is by receiving this general truth. Secondly, other *Sects* or *Parties* of men there are, who indeed profess to follow these Scriptures as their Rule; but it is not their owning, but their not right using them, which is the occasion of their error: it is their over rashly entertaining their own conceptions, without sufficient and unprejudiced inquiry, as if they were plain in Scripture, and necessary Doctrines, when indeed they are not; and the true way for healing these *distempers*, is by laying aside such rashness and prejudice, resolving to close with that only as necessary Doctrine, which upon impartial inquiry appears plain in Scriptures, and to use serious diligence in such inquiry, and this is to act according to *Protestant Principles*, yea, according to the Doctrine of Christ, who did not give such direction to the *Sadduces*, who strictly professed to own the Law, but denied the Resurrecti- 16.

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on, that the way to be free from their error, was to reject that Rule; but blamed them as not knowing the Scriptures, and declared that therefore they did err: and if this was truly heeded, all disorderly *Sects* would be at an end. But on the contrary, should we reject these excellent discoveries of God, because they have been abused by the sin of man, to the promoting many *Sects*, where should we leave? when Christians imbraced the Doctrine of *Jesus*, and what was delivered by the Apostles; many Sects hence took occasion all to pretend to this Doctrine: must Christianity therefore be also disclaimed? and with much greater reason must not all Controversial Enquiries, and speculations in *Theology* be abandoned, because they are the Parents of many Sects and Divisions even amongst the *Papists*? and must not all reasonings and apprehensions be disclaimed, because they are the original of so many disputes and different *Sects*, both in *Philosophy* and *Divinity*. This would be the way to renounce being men, and being Christians. Thus the rejecting the Scriptures would be taking Poyson instead of Cure: yea, it would be as if the food used amongst civilized Nations should be prohibited, and their civil rights disclaimed, because many abuse the former by intemperance to surfeits and Diseases; and the latter is the occasion of War, Strife and Contention; and therefore that men should live only on *Acorns*, and such other Fruits of the Field, and without any Possessions as Wild men, that they may be thereby out of these dangers. Who sees not that temperance and a peaceable spirit would be the best preservatives from these dangers, and would make the state of man and of the World excellent? and though there might then remain some infirmities in the Constitution either of the Body Natural or Politick; yet none so great as would be occasioned by rejecting the course of a civilized life: so if the abovementioned *Protestant Principles*, were put in practice, there might remain some *different* apprehensions and opinions; yet none such as would be either

dangerous

dangerous or disturbing: but as the persons might have Faith and Salvation; so both Church and State might injoy their peace and quiet.

An Answer to the fifth Discourse, *inquiring into Tradition, and shewing, that none of the Properties of the* Rule of Faith, *agree to it.*

BEfore I come to disprove what is delivered by this Author on the behalf of his way of Tradition; it will be requisite first to state the Question, concerning Oral and Practical Tradition; and to shew what we grant concerning it, and what we deny; that so it may after appear, how far we have cleared the truth of the Protestants Assertion. 1.

We assert the faithful delivery of Christian truths by word of mouth, to be a very useful way to bring many to the Faith, or to establish them in it; and we doubt not but that very great Multitudes who have not the advantage of using, reading or hearing the Scriptures, may by this means be brought to believe. Such was the case of some barbarous Nations in the Primitive times, and of many Pagans in these later times. But since the ceasing of the extraordinary gifts of revelation in the Church, the most faithful delivery of these truths is that which is guided by the Scripture, and takes that for its Rule; and such are the sober instructions of knowing and well grounded *Protestants*, and no other delivery can be faithful, but that which is agreeable to the Scripture, and its ruling Power:

Power : and this was the commendation *Irenæus* gave to *Polycarp*, *Euſ. Hiſt. Eccl. lib.* 5. *c.* 20. *that he delivered all things conſonant to Scriptures.* Yet though this way of delivery by word of mouth is very uſeful, yet it was then only a ſure *Rule of Faith*; when theſe truths were delivered of them who were inſpired of God, and thereby were infallible in their delivery: and ſuch was the delivery by the Apoſtles and Evangeliſts both in their preaching and in their Writing. Next to the Apoſtles, but not equally with them we would value the delivery of Apoſtolical men. But in after-ages, we deny any certainty of infallible delivery of truths, in the way of *Oral Tradition*, and acknowledge that only a certain delivery which appears ſuch, by its accord and agreement with the Scripture Rule.

3. And as to the ſenſe of Scripture, we doubt not but when God gave the Primitive Church gifts of interpretation, there was a delivery of the ſenſe of Scripture, not only in plain and neceſſary things which are obvious from the words, but even in many more hard and difficult Texts of Scripture. Yet all obſcure Scriptures were not even in thoſe times explained, and their explications generally received: ſince S. *Peter* ſpeaks of many things in S *Pauls Epiſtles* which were hard to be underſtood; which if the interpretation of them had been generally delivered, and received in the Churches in Gods name, they could not have been. The great and neceſſary Doctrines were then received, and delivered according to the true intent and meaning of Chriſt; and that was agreeable to the Scriptures. Hence the delivery of any truth to all Churches in the Apoſtles times, and its being received by them ſo far as this could be made evident, was a very uſeful way to deſtroy Hereſie; yet the Fathers who made uſe of this way, did alſo ſhew, that theſe truths were plain in Scripture. To theſe Churches, ſo far as the Doctrine by them received can be manifeſted, we would willingly appeal for a trial of Controverſies, and do readily imbrace

ſuch

such truths, as by sure evidence appear to be the Doctrine held by those Churches. Partly as thus delivered, and chiefly as clear in Scripture, we receive those Articles of Faith contained in the *Creed*, commonly owned in the *Catholick Church*: but the Creed we conceive to be delivered in a much more sure and safe way than Oral Tradition, since the words of it, have with common consent been agreed on, fixed and determined; the want of which advantage in the *Romish* Tradition, doth manifest it to be very alterable, and uncertain in other Doctrines. But that all points of Christian Doctrine, or Apostolical interpretations of hard Scriptures, are infallibly delivered from the Primitive Churches, by the way of *Oral* and *Practical Tradition*, we deny. Nor can there be more reason to perswade us, that the present delivery of the *Romish Church*, doth faithfully preserve such Doctrines and interpretations, than would also perswade, that when *Ezra* read the Law, and caused the people to understand the sense of it, we might certainly find the Doctrines by him taught, and the interpretations by him given, amongst the *Traditions* of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*; as surely as we could have them from *Ezra*'s mouth, or from them who heard him, and were faithful relaters of his teaching.

I will only further here observe, that *Tradition* may be considered, either as a meer speculation and notion; and thus a man may imagine a constant delivery of the self same things, truths and actions, by the successions of several generations, without considering whether there really be any such delivery, or whether it can be rationally expected: and to treat of such a *Tradition* as this being a *Rule of Faith*, is but to discourse of aiery fancies and imaginations. Or else *Tradition* may be considered as something reall and in being; and thus we may inquire, whether such a *Tradition* as is to be found in the Church, or in the World, be a sure way to deliver truth infallibly to Posterity. This is that we *Protestants* deny, and if this Author intend not the proof of this, he will speak no-

thing to the purpose; and will only shew that such *Tradition* as they of *Rome*, or any other in the World have not, might be the *Rule of Faith*: and notwithstanding all this, they will be destitute of it.

5. I shall now examine his Discourses of *Tradition*, in which every Reader will be able to observe, that he hath made no proof considerable, unless he hath said more for the *Tradition* of the *Romish Church*, than can be said to prove Religion not corrupted before the Flood, or after the Flood amongst the *Gentiles*; or before the *Captivity*, and at the time of *Christ* amongst the *Jews*.

6. §. 1. Coming to inquire whether that *Tradition* be the *Rule of Faith*, which he calls *Oral* and *Practical*, he thus explains it: *We mean a delivery down from hand to hand, (by words and a constant course of frequent visible actions conformable to those words) of the sense and faith of the fore-Fathers.* Our business in this Discourse, is to inquire whether this can be a *Rule of Faith*, which the Discourser affirms, and Protestants deny.

7. §. 2. To understand this way of *Tradition*, he observes on this manner; *Children learn the names of Persons, Rooms and things they converse with; and afterwards to write, read, and use civil carriage. And looking into the thing, they gain the notions of several objects either by their own senses, or by the help of having them pointed at; and this he observes, is the constant course of the World continued every Age, yea, every Year or Month.* This is *Tradition* in Civil matters. Concerning this Tradition it may be observed, that about matters visible to sense, the Objects or Things, and the names of the things must be distinctly considered. The common notions of Objects visible, as of Heaven, Earth, Sun, Moon, Rooms, Man, Trees, *&c.* are by common apprehensions even of Children received from Senses, not by *tradition* of a former Generation; and those apprehensions are preserved by the view of the visible objects. But the words, or names, are indeed delivered in such a way of *Tradition*: but words thus delivered, are not alwaies

alwaies preserved from alteration and change: yea, even at *Rome*, notwithstanding this way of delivery, wherein the following Generation have received their Language from their Fathers; yet if they who conversed there in the Apostles times, were now alive, they would discern such alteration of speech, and even in speaking mens names, that they would not be able to understand their present language: and if they can shew no greater security for the delivery of their Doctrine, than of their Language; that also may be as much changed, notwithstanding their help of *Tradition*. And it may be further observed, that those Languages which in this way of *Traditional Learning*, are grosly corrupted, and even lost; such as *Hebrew*, *Greek*, and *Latin*; yet in Books and Writings, they are faithfully preserved: which shews, Writings more sure keepers, or preservers of words and civil things, than this way of *Tradition* is. It would be needless to shew, that in Writings and civil behaviour, there is as great variation in some few successions of Generations: for this is sufficiently known to all observing men.

p. 3, 4. He applies this to Christianity; and saith, *So Children get by degrees notions of God, Christ, Saviour, Hell, Virtue and Vice; and are shewn how to say Grace and Prayers; afterwards they become acquainted with the Ten Commandments, Creed, Sacraments, forms of Prayer, and other practices of Christianity; the actions and carriages of the elder guiding the younger, to frame their lives to several virtues by the Doctrine delivered in words; as Faith, Hope, Charity, Prayer*, &c, To this I answer; That Children do indeed by degrees learn the Notions of God, *&c.* But this *Tradition* alone is not that which guides them here; but also the Scriptures and Ancient Writers, are of great use, as they inable the Teachers of the foregoing Generation to guide them more faithfully. Indeed in the way of this *Tradition* alone, some general signification of words which concern matters of Faith, may probably be delivered: as that God signifies him, whom we are to worship, reverence, serve 8.

and obey, and such like. But more particular notions of these matters of Religion, as they may be sometimes preserved aright; so where is no other way of preservation, than this *Tradition*, they may be very corruptly and dangerously delivered. It is certain that *Noah* knew the true God, and taught his Children concerning him, and in his daies, and since their Posterity increased to great multitudes; and yet having only this way of *Tradition*, they were so far corrupted in their knowledge of God, that they owned Creatures, yea, the lowest of Creatures for God, and thereby lost the knowledge of the true God: and yet even the *Gentiles*, who worshipped other things instead of God, pretended that this they received by this way of *Tradition*; and this was their great Argument, why they should not receive Christianity, because their Ancestors had delivered to them that way of Worship they then used in *Heathenism*. *Clemens Alexand.* in his *Admonition* to the *Gentiles*, brings them in speaking thus, *We must not reject those things which were delivered to us from our Fathers*: and almost all the Fathers who write against *Gentilism*, industriously shew the vanity of this their plea.

9. The saying of Prayers and Grace aright, depends much upon the preservation of the true Notions of God and Christ, and the knowledge of Duties and Promises: and therefore if there be any corruption in the delivery of those things, it is like to be also in the performance of these actions of Prayer and saying Grace; in which case will the carriages and practices of the elder Christians be corrupted. But he sayes, they learn the Creed, ten Commandments, and forms of Prayer. The Creed is indeed a good preservative of the chief Articles of our Belief. Had it not been for this Form, and some other like it received in the Church (which because written, and in stinted words, is more of kin to the way of Scripture delivery, than to other delivery by *Oral Tradition*; it is like these points of Faith might have been rejected or lost among them who only hold unto the way of that *Tradition*. The ten Commandments

ments are likewise a sure preservative of that which God requires in them from man, but these are the words of Scripture. Neither the Creed, nor the ten Commandments, concern the Controversie of *Tradition*, as it is disowned by *Protestants*, otherwise than to observe the way whereby the certainty of them is conveyed unto us; and thus we do assert, that we are more certain of the Creed, by its being committed to Writing, and comprized in a fixed form of words, and being every way agreeable to Scripture, than any can be by way of delivery from Father to Son only by word of mouth, in all successions of Generations: and the same certainty we have of the ten Commandments, by their being in the Scripture Records, and being likewise delivered in writing; which is the way which even *Papists* make use of as well as others. What he adds of Sacraments and forms of Prayer, these are like to guide men aright where the notions of Religion concerning them are preserved intire; but if there be a corruption in Religion, these things, as soon as others, may be depraved, as indeed they are in the *Romish Church*: where though the Creed and the Commandments do deliver much truth; yet are they somewhat perverted by *Traditional Expositions*, nor can they secure from the delivery of many other corruptions.

In §. 5. He desires us to consider, *How the Primitive Faithful were inured to Christianity e're the Books of Scripture were written or communicated.* We know this then was by the preaching of the Apostles among them, who had the inspiration of God to guide them, and were unerrable deliverers; and yet even they in this preaching made very great use of the Books of the Old Testament, to prevail with men to receive the Doctrines of *Jesus*. But I shall further mind him, that the Christians at *Rome* in the Primitive state of that Church, before they had any written Scripture of the New Testament, thought it requisite, for the inuring themselves to Christianity, to obtain some Writings Apostolical, concerning whom *Eusebius* writes thus: 10.

thus : *At* Rome *the light of Religion did so shine upon the minds of these hearers of* Peter, *that they thought it not sufficient to content themselves with once hearing him, nor with the unwritten Doctrine of the Divine preaching : but with all manner of perswasions, they did earnestly desire* Mark *who followed* Peter, *that by writing he would leave them a memorial of that Doctrine, which was then delivered to them by words : nor did they desist until he did perform it ; and this was the cause of the writing that which is called, The Gospel according to* Mark. He likewise relates ; *That when the Apostle knew what was done by the revelation of the Spirit, he was pleased with the forwardness of the men, and by his Authority confirmed the Writing, that it might be read in the Churches.* This same History is related also both by *Clemens*, and by *Papias : and after this,* Mark *preached in* Egypt *that same Gospel which he had written.* Thus *Eusebius Hist. Eccles. lib.* 2. *c.* 10, 11. and to the same purpose, relating the words of *Clemens, lib.* 6. *c.* 14.

11. But our Discourser tells us, *He dare affirm that* Presbyterians *and* Protestants *adhere to their Faith, because their Fathers or Pastors taught them it, and not upon the evidence of Scriptures letter to their own private judgements ; because they who are brought up under Mr.* Baxter, *are apt to follow him ; and others Mr.* Pierce. To this I answer, That Protestants value the judgements of their Teachers, if they think them to be learned and good men; but yet in the Articles of Christian Faith, and the great truths of God, they do discern other grounds, and surer to rely on, than the opinion of Teachers ; and therefore whatever Teacher should contradict such truths, they would not follow him. And if any persons are so unstable, as in such things to be led away by the Authority of any men, they are far from being grounded Protestants. In some matters more difficult, or Controversial, many Protestants are not capable of being better satisfied, than by the judgment of their Pastors, and are to be commended for following them : yet in this case, they own not their judgment as a *Rule of their Faith* ; but

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the best help to their understanding in a case of difficulty. But if any Protestant by misapprehension do close with such things controversial, as necessary points of Faith, if afterwards he discerns them matters of Controversie, not clear in Scripture, or that the contrary is rather true and grounded on Scripture, he will then submit his former apprehensions, to the greater evidence now received. And by this means through diligent examining, very great multitudes of Protestants, who have given up themselves impartially to follow Scripture truth, have received some opinions different from some particular opinions of their Parent or Teacher. And even all other Protestants, who are not capable of making trial of the grounds of all controverted opinions, yet unanimously will acknowledge, that the trial of any truths by the Scripture, is much more considerable, than by any Teachers judgment; and therefore if they were capable, they would much rather chuse to be stedfastly fixed in any truth by the former, than to be only perswaded to it by the latter. Whence it appears, that *Protestants* generally own only the Scriptures for their Rule. And were there ever any who desired to be instructed in *Philosophy*, or any Science, designing therein to follow reason as their Rule, who were not as much guided by their Teachers or Instructers, as *Protestants* are by theirs? that is, to value their Authority or opinion, until by examination of it by the Rule, they should discern it an error.

§. 6. He tells us, *That Objections made against a Prophetical* afflatus, *and against the* res traditæ, *or things delivered instead of Tradition it self, can have no force against his opinion.* I shall not dispute the truth of these things, but shall so far satisfie this Authour, as to assure him, my following answer shall proceed neither of these waies. 12.

§. 7. He tells us, *The first Property of the* Rule of Faith, *doth agree to Tradition: to wit, it is evident to all, as to its existence; because we see and hear daily sounds and actions, about Practical Doctrines conveyed down to us.* But is this all 13.

that

that this Authour thinks necessary to be proved ? Did he not demand much more concerning Scripture, than that the Book might be seen, and the words heard ? did he not then require proof that Scriptures are Gods word, *&c.* Surely it is not only requisite, that some thing should be delivered and received ; but at least it must be necessary for every Generation to know that all that Faith which the former received and professed, is fully delivered and rightly received by them. For since, as himself saith in this Paragraph, *Tradition* is the open conveyance of Doctrines, if they be either not delivered or not received, there is no conveyance, and so a failure of the thing it self, which is *Tradition.* Now we assert, that there can be no certainty of any such exact delivery in any one Generation since the Apostles daies, and that for these reasons. First, because many matters, especially in difficult things, may be mistaken for want of right understanding, and then these mistakes will be delivered. That they are mistaken by many, appears by the disagreement of great numbers, and disputes about several Doctrines, whether they be *de fide*, or not ; and about the sense of *Papal Decrees* and *Canons* of *Councils :* whence it is certain they do not all apprehend the truth; or at least, will not confess they do; which will as much overthrow *Tradition.* Secondly, It's possible, that through the prevalency of corruption and sin in a Generation of men, they may much lose that knowledge of God which they had, even in matters of Faith, and then cannot deliver it aright. It's certain it was thus in the Generations after *Noah*, in that great point concerning the true God and his Worship ; and there was then as much to be said from the nature of *Tradition*, as now among *Papists* ; and therefore there can be now no security to the contrary, unless the piety of all Ages could be demonstrated ; which the great complaints of the Teachers of several Ages renders impossible. Thirdly, because through the working of mans thoughts in apprehending, and considering, and explaining truths, many things are concluded as consequences

ces and explications of truths, which were not received from the former age: thus in almost all the Books and Discourses of the *Papists*, and in the Book of this Authour, are many particular assertions, considerations and speculations, which were not received from the open *Tradition* of the foregoing Age; and they are here delivered, and may hence by others be received. Fourthly, there may also be a combination (through great viciousness, or disrelish of truth) against some particular truth, which opposeth either the outward interest, or the corrupt life. Thus God complains of the *Jews*, Jer. 5. 30. *The Prophets propheſie falſely*, and *the Prieſts bear rule by their means, and my people love to have it ſo.* Fifthly, there may possibly be an omission of the delivery of many things to be delivered and true: and I dare say, it is impossible for this Author, to prove upon his Principles, that all truths are handed down from one Generation to another, either amongst the Learned or the Vulgar: and yet it will concern him to do it concerning every revealed truth, since he rejects, or at least will not own the distinction of truths into *fundamental* and not *fundamental*. All these things considered, there can be no certainty that there is any sure *Tradition*.

§. 8. He saith, *The ſecond Property belongs to Tradition;* 14.
to wit, it is evidenceable as to its ruling power, to any inquirer. For, *it is certain, if it be followed, it can convey Chriſts Doctrine down to the Worlds end, as will appear if any conſider, that if Proteſtants have Children, who believe and practiſe as their Fathers brought them up; they will be Proteſtants too, and ſo forward from Generation to Generation.* I answer, *Tradition* framed according to a notion which would free it from all the aboveſaid imperfections, would be indeed evidenceable as to its ruling power to every capacity: but this is not such a *Tradition* as can be expected to be found in the World. But if any man consider of such a *Tradition* as is in the World; in case he be confident of the true delivery of the sense of the foregoing Generation; yet it will not be evidenceable as to its ruling Power, un-

less he can be satisfied, that the foregoing Generation did certainly hold the truth, in all points. Persons who have little knowledge, may possibly believe this, without supposing it at all doubtful. But they who know how uncertain the way of *Tradition* is, and what corruption of Doctrine was in the *Jewish Church*, what Prophecies of Apostasie under the *New Testament*; and what great defections were reproved in many particular Churches in the Apostles times; as the Churches of *Galatia*, and the Church of *Sardis*, and others; will see that they can have no other certainty of the former Generation, where their Fore-Fathers lived, being in the right, (unless they make use of some other trial, besides a knowledge that they professed Christianity) than an over-weening esteem of their own Relations, which may be an affectionate, but not a rational ground of perswasion: and by this means the perswading virtue of *Tradition* may be prevalent, but its ruling Power cannot be evidenced. Indeed where there is no better help than *Tradition*, it may lead to error in one place, if it lead to truth in another, and so is no where certain; thus it did perswade the *Heathen* to refuse *Christianity*, because their Fathers delivered other wayes of *Gentile* Worship: which I suppose is part of that *vain conversation received by Tradition from their Fathers*, mentioned by Saint *Peter*, 1 Pet. 1. 18. Yea, God himself complains, *Jer.* 9. 13, 14. *They have forsaken my Law, which I set before them, and have walked after the imagination of their own heart, and after Baalim which their Fathers taught them.* *Protestants* acknowledge the practice or belief of Fore-Fathers, to be a considerable Motive to perswade, either to judge or do as they judged, and did; until by inquiring into the Rule, it shall discover any error therein, and then it is to be declined. Yet withal he who understands, that his Fore-Fathers did keep to a fixed Rule in preserved Records, hath thereby the more reason to rely on their judgment, as a strong Motive to perswade him: and this is the case of *Protestants*.

§. 9. He

§. 9. He proceeds to shew, *That the third condition of the* Rule of Faith, *agrees to Tradition; that is, it is apt to justifie unreflecting persons, that they proceed rationally while they rely on it: because it is a madness, not to believe a multitude of knowers, in things they were taught, and practised all their lives. Nor can any deceit be suspected in such multitudes, who all agree in a matter of fact, appear to speak seriously, and practise as they speak, especially since Parents will be apt to teach their Children things good and true.* 15.

I answer, Where there are many testifiers capable of giving testimonies surely, it would be a madness not to believe a multitude of knowers: but where what evidence they give, supposeth such innumerable contingencies, which though possibly they may all have happened right; yet it is a thousand times more like they have not this testimony, is far from any tolerable satisfaction. But in the present case, none can give testimony, but only concerning the last Age; nor concerning that with absolute certainty. They cannot testifie what is necessary here to be known; to wit, that all Ages were free in every Succession from unfaithfulness of memory, that they forgat no truth, that they all had right understanding to err in none, and a liking of it to imbrace all truth, and a sufficient care not to add any explications, which might vary from the truth, nor to deliver any thing upon opinion, which they did not certainly know to be truth, and withal that every Age did commit the whole truth to the next Generation. If any one of these fail in any one succession, all security of their knowledge is gone; and a former Generation proceeding upon *Tradition*, cannot testifie all this, and therefore cannot be a multitude of knowers. This way of Tradition must therefore suppose all things right in the *Roman* Church, but will not prove them so. Can there be any likelihood now, of the certainty of Oral and *practical Traditions* bringing down truth, since before the Flood, where the Successions of Generations were not many, and many of them lived together, and 16.

had an *Adam* cast out of Paradise, as a visible token of Gods vengeance, against them who were negligent in Religion; yet it is certain there was great corruption at that time? And after the Flood they worshipped other gods, though they had the argument of the *deluge*, to make them more careful, both to deliver and receive the true Religion: after *Moses*'s *time*, they had the Motive of the *terrible presence* upon *Mount Sinai*, and many wonderful judgments; and after *Ezra*'s time, the Argument of the *Captivity*, to make them careful in Religion: and yet in all these times they miscarried.

17. *But* (he tells us) *no deceit can be suspected here.* I answer, if there be so many waies of failing otherwise, what if there be no design of deceiving? but indeed it is not a thing impossible, that there should be a designed forsaking the truth in the Church, which in the way of *Oral Tradition*, will eventually include deceiving. Is it not possible that men who profess Religion, may so far gratifie the Devil, and their own vain imaginations, as to forsake the truth they know, in great matters of Faith, and to practise and live contrary to it, and to promote that which they know is contrary to truth? Else what mean such complaints as these, *Jer.* 11. 9, 10. *A conspiracy is found amongst the men of Judah, and among the Inhabitants of Jerusalem. They are turned back to the iniquity of their fore-fathers, which refused to hear my words, and they went after other Gods to serve them.* Is not a conspiring to refuse Gods Word, and to serve other Gods, a designed rejecting the truth? Yea, I further demand, what account can possibly be given of the high corruptions among the *Jews*, all along from *Moses* to *Christ*, unless a designed rejecting the truth? especially in such cases as these. That they who had seen Gods wonders in *Egypt*, and had heard the commandments delivered on *Mount Sinai*, should say to *Aaron*, *Arise, make us Gods*, Exod. 32. 1. If this was not done wilfully, and against sufficient knowledge, then we must imagine that they who did see the Law given on *Mount Sinai*, yet knew not

not the first or second Commandment. Yea, after many severe judgments, to shew how necessary the observation of Gods Commandments were, yet when they served *Peor* in the Wilderness, and joined themselves to other Gods frequently in the times of the *Judges*, and of many of the *Kings of Israel*; could this be for want of knowledge, when the Law of God was among them, which would teach them otherwise? Yet if this *Authour* shall think it was of great ignorance; this will as much destroy his way of *Tradition*, since it will then follow that there was not sufficient delivery of truth from hand to hand, to make it knowable. And yet many of these defections were very general in all the people and Priests: and their serving *Baalim*, which their Fathers taught them, was of long continuance.

§. 10. He asserts, by way of Answer to an Objection, 18.
That *men cannot be as much justified for believing Scripture; because setting aside Traditions help, this only depends on skills, judgements and fancies; and not on certain sense, either for the meaning or letter of Scripture.* Touching the letter of Scripture, we set not aside the help of *Tradition*, but have a very sure way of *Traditional Record* to relie on: and I have in former Discourses shewed, that we have a certain knowledge of Scripture, both as to letter and sense. Yea, the sense of Scripture is more easily discovered in many concerning truths, than the sense of *Tradition* can be; because though the words be supposed equally intelligible, whether written or spoken; it is more evident that the words found in Scripture, are such as contain the sense of Scripture, than that such and such words do contain the sense of the *Church Tradition*: Because it is certain that in many concerning points, there are many things delivered by several in the *Church*, which yet are not by the *Papists* themselves owned for *Church Traditions*; so that it will be hard, if not beyond the reach of the Vulgar, to understand what words in many points he may doubt of, do truly express the sense of the *Church*; unless he can hear

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it plainly expressed in some approved and received Writings; such as either *Scriptures*, *Canons* of *Catholick Councils*, or *Liturgies* or the like: the former as this Authour too much rejects; so all or almost all his Arguments will as much plead against the other, which the Vulgar are not capable of searching. Yet that we may compare the evidence to the common apprehensions of men given by *Scripture*, or by *Oral and practical Tradition*; let us follow him in observing which evidence a Jury would sooneſt close with. The case is by him in this §. very unfaithfully propounded; *Whether they would condemn a man upon the testimony of six Witnesses upon sight, or upon the judgment or opinion of a thousand men?* for as we have shewed, it is not only skill and opinion, that *Protestants* do ground upon, but delivery of Records: and therefore the case in truth should be thus propounded; *Whether if any matter of Fact be inquired of, they would be the more swayed, by the appearance of several persons, who assert, that they have heard many say, that they heard many others say, that they received from others, and they from others by hearsaies, at the fortieth or fiftieth hand; or by others, who shall produce plain Records, and those preserved safe in several Courts, which all agree in testifying it was otherwise? Or if the Question be about any Legacy, if the one party brings such hearsaies abovementioned, and the other brings a Copy of the Will preserved in the Court, and evidence that in the same manner it was inrolled in several other Courts; is it not plain the latter will appear the better Evidence to the common sense of mankind?*

19. But in this §. 10. he further adds, *The Vulgar have reason to believe, there was such an one as King* James, *or Queen* Elizabeth, *of which they are no otherwise ascertained but by Tradition: but if you pump their common reason, about the Authority of the Statute Book, you shall find them at a loss.* Concerning King *James*, or Queen *Elizabeth*; they may indeed own them by the common *received Tradition*, because they know this is actually delivered by those who knew it, and that it is not capable of a mistake, nor could any interest

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be supposed to devise this, nor can mens conceptions of this vary from what is intended to be delivered: but in none of these things can men have security in the delivery of many truths by *Oral Tradition*, as was observed in Answer to §. 7. But to put the case more like this, of discovering which is more justifiable, of believing *Scripture* or *Tradition*; I demand, whether as to all considerable actions, atchievements or constitutions under these Princes, it be more rational to relie on what appears in common fame, concluding that nothing is considerable, which was not there preserved; or to apply our selves to some good Historians, especially if we could be certain we could find such, as had a certain knowledge of all such things, and had a faithful design to commit the truth and nothing else to Writing, concerning all these things. This security we have concerning the Scriptures; since it is certain the Apostles and Evangelists did fully know all points of Faith, delivered to the World by Jesus Christ, and did declare them in their Writings with like faithfulness. Concerning the Vulgars knowledge of the Authority of the *Statute Book*; it is evident that if they hear the *Statute Book* to be published by such a man, or the *Statutes* by him collected; they can thence conclude, that as far as they can be assured, that it was his Work, and that he was certainly able to collect these *Statutes*, and did in this act according to his utmost knowledge; so far they are assured of this Books Authority; as also as far as they are assured of the faithfulness and ability of judgment in them who own it as such. But in all these things we have certainty of Scripture, that it was written by the Apostles and Evangelists, by the *general Tradition* of it as such by all Churches; that they were able and faithful, and their Books faithfully written, both from our Saviours approving them to dispense his Gospel, and his Church receiving them as such dispensers, even in these Writings; and God himself bearing them Witness, both with Signs and Wonders, and manifold gifts of the Holy Ghost. So that we are as sure concerning

cerning Scripture, as a man could be of the Authority of a *Statute Book*, if he knew there was a collection of our Common Law, (as was done by *Justinian*'s order in the *Civil*) made, approved, and confirmed by order of the Supreme Power; and thereby Enacted, that this Collection should be owned as the *Statutes* of *England*. Here it would be a madness to doubt. So that this third Property of the Rule of Faith is agreeable to *Scripture*, but not to *Oral Tradition*.

20. §. 11. He proceeds to the sixth Property, *That it is certain in it self, because this will prove the fourth, fifth and seventh.* Now though this be not true, that what is certain in its self can satisfie the piercing Wits, and convince obstinate Adversaries, and be ascertainable unto us, because there may be a certainty in the thing, which is not discerned; and it is not the being, but the evidence of certainty submitted to, that works these effects; else could there be no dissatisfaction in any thing, since all truth is certainly in it self truth: yet if he can prove the certainty of *Tradition*, I shall over and above yield the rest. This he thus goes about to prove. *Since Faith must be certain, and must have a certain Rule, he hath* (as he saies) *shewed that Scripture is not certain, therefore Oral Tradition is.* This loose Argument deserves no better answer, than that I have shewed *Scripture* is certain in it self, therefore *Oral Tradition* is not. Yet I must tell him, his Argument is otherwise faulty, than in supposing his having proved *Scripture* not certain; for there is something besides *Scripture*, which is a better guide or leader to the Faith, than the *Oral Tradition*, and that is the Doctrine of the *Primitive Church*, as preserved in the Ancient Fathers, or approved Writers of their time. For though they were men, and might in some things mistake, and therefore their testimony is much inferiour to *Scripture*; yet since they lived in times near the *Apostles*, and when the vigour of Christian piety was much continued; the Doctrines then received are more like to be truth, than what is now owned in the *Church of Rome*,

Rome, after many successions of Ages, and great degeneracy of life, even in the dreggs of time. And we have as much and more reason, to think these men, both capable of knowing Doctrines then delivered as the Faith of Christ, and faithful in relating them, as we can have to judge so concerning any persons now in the *Church of Rome*. But that there is not an agreement in all considerable points, in what was then delivered and owned by the Fathers, and the present *Traditions* of the *Romish Church*, may be collected from one instance I shall hereafter mention, *Disc.* 8. and so far as concerns this Author from their *Rule of Faith*, which shall be discussed in the end of this Book.

§. 12. He would prove the certainty of Tradition, in that he saith, *It hath for its basis, the best nature in the Universe, man's; and that not in speculations, which may mistake by passion; but his eyes and ears, which are necessarily subject to the operations of nature, and this in most; many times every day; which is a much higher certainty, than a sworn Witness hath, of what he saw or heard but once.* These upon serious inquiry appear empty vain words. For doth Faith consist only in seeing and hearing? Must there not be a delivering, and receiving, which supposeth conceptions and many other acts of the mind? He who considers this aright, will find the *basis* of *Tradition* to be like Fame's basis; a man clad with all his infirmities, with a memory that may let things slip, especially if they be numerous, as revealed truths are; with an understanding that may mistake, especially in things difficult, as many truths are; with affections that may disrelish or slight them, if corruption prevail, as it may oft do in the members of the Church; with imaginations which may alter or add somewhat, when they think they only explain; and yet still may they not deliver all they know and remember. In this case he who may be certain that he hath heard such and such words delivered, may remain very uncertain, whether they be true or not. And he who is a Witness in any Court, may be much more sure, that what he once saw or heard, (if he perfectly re- 21.

member it) was so heard or seen by him; than any man can be of the true relation of things he hath oft heard spoken by men, who took them themselves upon others relations, and they on others, and so on. So that the great imperfection of *Tradition*, is chiefly as to the delivery of it by former Ages; which this Author doth not so much as touch of here, in his proof of its certainty; and what pretensions he makes use of in after Discourses, shall be answered in their place. But what he saith, *That in most, many times every day are these impressions made upon their senses, this may be true concerning some Christian truths*: but to assert this concerning all truth, is such an apparent falsity, as no ingenuous man could be guilty of. For it is plain that in many things they of the *Romish Church* cannot agree, which is truth; and have had in many Cases, Councils and Decrees to determine what things are matters of Faith; and in many other things they are yet undetermined; which could not be, if these things were daily cleared to their senses, unless they be men of much duller sense, than the rest of mankind are.

22. §. 13. He reminds of what he had said before, §. 8. *That it is as evident, that while the next Age believes and practises, as the former Age did; they are of the same Faith; as it is that to believe the same, is to believe the same.* But this is not at all to the purpose, concerning *Oral Tradition*: only this *Discourser* pleaseth himself generally in shifting off, or wholly omitting matters difficult, and sometimes going about to prove what no Adversary would dissent in. But there is no certainty in the way of *Tradition*, as we have above shewed, that any Age doth in all things believe as the former Age held. See *n.* 13, 14.

23. §. 14. He tells his Reader, That *Dissenters or Doubters can say nothing against the way of Tradition; not with all the quirks ingenuously misused Logick and abused into Sophistry can furnish them with.* Indeed what he hath hitherto pleaded for *Tradition*, hath been nothing else but disingenuously abused *Logick* and *Sophistry*; but what he now asserts, is

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a *bold daring* to let his Reader know, that under some contrived expressions, he will strain to vent any falshood, though never so gross. Will he say that nothing can be said against this Rule, when he cannot but know that *Protestants* who dissent from it, do say very much against it? yea, they say so much as they know can never be solidly answered. Yea, that we may see how little he designs truth in his Discourse, he who here would perswade his Reader, that nothing can be said against his way of *Oral Tradition*, yet *Disc.* 7. §. 1. himself tells him of somewhat that seems mainly to prejudice it; and spends that Discourse in Answer. Though indeed much more than that is by us observed, against *Tradition*.

He concludes §. 15. from his Discourse, *that the four last conditions of the Rule of Faith agree to Tradition*: but since by Trial his Discourse appears very unsound and faulty; I conclude from the detection of his falshood, that they are not agreeable to *Tradition*, and that *Tradition* is not the *Rule of Faith*. 24.

An Answer to his sixth Discourse, *shewing, that he hath given neither Demonstration, nor probable Reason, to manifest* Tradition *indefectible* à priori.

2. Q. 1, 2. HE propounds, *How know we that Tradition was ever held to by any?* and tells us, *he oweth a clearing of this to his former Discourse. But,* he saith, *the carriage of Protestants makes this inquiry needless: for if they had not faulted the Rule, but only pretended, men had failed it, they might have deluded the World with some colour, that they had held to the Doctrine of Ancestors, and only deserted us because we deserted Ancestors formerly: but if they fault the Rule, they judge Tradition ever stood our friend, and would overthrow them,——else they had no more efficacious way to ruine us, than to oppose us upon those Principles laid in the former Discourse: since the renouncers of Tradition a little after the Primitive times (when they pretend we fell) might be easily discovered.* To answer this, its requisite first to understand the meaning. Now his inquiry of *Tradition* being held to ever, I conceive, signifies thus much; whether every Age hath designed the careful receiving, holding and delivering all things owned by the former Generation; in the same way as they were thence delivered, and also whether they have effectually performed this? And if this could be proved, *Protestants* would grant his former Discourse satisfactory, so far as concerns *Tradition* being the *Rule of Faith.* The proof of this is highly necessary, when he hath to do with *Protestants*; because they therefore fault this Rule of *Tradition*, because they know

know it such, as cannot be probably expected to be long held to, nor can ever be demonstrated, or rationally proved to have been thus held to at any time, unless by recourse to another *Rule of Trial*. Wherefore since we know the Rule insufficient which *Papists* relie on; we delude not, but with truth and evidence assure the World, that we desert them, only because they have deserted the Doctrine of *Ancestors* formerly. Whether this was by mistake or by perverseness and wilfulness, it is not necessary for us to know or declare, since we do discover the difference of their Doctrine from that of their Ancestors, partly by the writing of Fathers, who shew what Doctrine they received; and principally from the testimony of the Scriptures, which assures us what was the Doctrine in the beginning preached by the Apostles. Now when we give evidence, that they have deserted the Primitive Doctrine; it is a very vain proposal to require of us to discover who were the first Renouncers; for though some *Protestants* have done somewhat to this purpose, and some Renouncers may be manifested; yet since neither *Protestants* nor *Papists*, can know all particular designs or actings of men in former Generations; and whatever may be known by History, upon the Principles of this *Discourser*, must not be believed; especially since this is neither the only way, nor the best way to shew Primitive Doctrines disowned; I may well conclude, that the proposal it self, is both needless and unreasonable. Will this *Authour* assert that *Gentilism* pretended to be held from their Fathers, was a *Tradition* truly derived from *Noah*, unless the person or persons can be named to him, who were the first deserters of *Noah*'s Doctrine? or must the *Traditions* of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* be owned as the Doctrine of *Moses*, until the *Authours* of the first corruptions of those *Traditions* can be found out? or could not our Saviour and his Apostles, condemn such *Traditions*, unless they first declared the Authors of them? Doth he think it would be reason or madness, if a temperate man in a sick state, should say to his

his Physician, I am sure I was in health, and have indeavoured to keep my body in the same good temper I was in; and therefore until I can have evidence given me, what time and by what act my Distemper began, I will not be perswaded but that I am still in health. Or if an house that was once firm and strong, now is cracked, or decaied or burnt down; can this be no otherwise satisfactorily demonstrated, than by examining when the first crack or beginning of decay was occasioned, and by what means, and when it was set on fire, and by whom? And shall he who sees this house ready to moulder down, or in its ashes, think it reasonable to deny or doubt that it is either decaied or burnt, if he cannot be satisfied in the former inquiries? I know *Papists* have generally more wit than to act upon such reasonings as these, in purchasing such houses; and therefore I have the more reason to suspect, that they do not mean honestly in urging such frivolous things in concernments of Religion.

2. Yet this *Discourser* further deludes his Reader, in saying we pretend they fell a little after the Primitive times; by which he interprets himself to mean, times, which had a vicinity to the Apostles; as if *Protestants* did indeed grant, that *Popery* as it now is, was held and practised ever since a little after the Apostles: whereas this Discourser cannot but know, that *Protestants* do generally assert, that though some corruptions might creep into the *Church*, soon after the *Apostles* daies, yet in the chief points of Controversie between *Protestants* and *Papists*, we do assert that for the first six hundred Years; the genuine Writings of the *Fathers* do favour the *Protestants* assertions, and in many things very long after, and therefore that those *Popish* assertions are of later original.

3. §. 3, 4, 5. He tells us, *That such is Gods goodness, that the* Rule of Faith *hath that in it, which obligeth the generality not to desert it. That Tradition is actually indefectible*, he undertakes to demonstrate *à priori*, from proper Causes, and *à posteriori* from a now-a-daies experienced effect. His grounds

grounds for the former are these. *First, the Christian Doctrine was at first unanimously setled in the hearts of great multitudes, in several parts of the World. Secondly, this Doctrine was by all those, believed to be the way to Heaven, and the deserting it the way to damnation: whence the greatest hopes and fears imaginable, ingaged them to adhere to it. Thirdly, hopes and fears strongly applied, are causes of actual will. Lastly, this was feasible, the things were knowable, and within their power. Therefore from Age to Age a great number would continue to hold themselves, and teach their Children, as themselves had been taught; that is, would follow and stick to Tradition.*

I now come to examine these four grounds. Concerning the first there was indeed Christian Doctrine firmly setled in multitudes, and very great numbers; that is, so much of the Christian Doctrine, as was requisite for them to know, or all the great and most necessary Christian truths: but that all matters of Faith, or all Divine truth declared by Christ and his Apostles, was firmly setled in all the faithful, can never be proved. Yea, evident it is, that among the most eminent Fathers, who lived not long after the Apostles daies, there are acknowledged some errors, and they were not alone in them, but had many partakers and followers: *Cyprian* erred about *re-baptizing*; *Justin Martyr*, *Papias*, *Irenæus*, *Lactantius*, and others, were in the *error* of the *Chiliasts*; and many other erroneous opinions were in some of the forementioned Authors, and in *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and much more in *Tertullian* and *Origen*. So that though this ground (if the others all hold) may help us to know the great points of Religion, yet it can be no security to all the truths of God, from the multitude of Believers. The second ground is of the same nature with the former, which concerns only the chief truths of Religion, in the generality of Christians. For the faithful could not while free from error, believe this which is an error, that the want of understanding any truth of God, was the way to damnation: for S. *Paul*

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saith expresly, that they must *receive the weak in the faith*, and *God hath received him*, *and God is able to make him stand*, Rom. 14. 1, 3, 4. So that though they did know the great truths of Christian Faith necessary to Salvation, and therefore would diligently learn them and teach them; and though they did know that the denial or rejecting of any truth, which they had evidence was of God, was likewise dreadfully dangerous, which would ingage them to hold fast all the truth they had received, upon account of the highest hopes and fears set before them; yet would not the same inforcements lie upon them, to shew the necessity, either of their own knowing, or of their Children being instructed in all manner of truths: since there were Mysteries and strong meat for the perfect, and milk for the weak. Yet I also assert, that as there were many persons of eminent knowledge in the mysteries of the Gospel, in the Apostles daies, who had great *gifts* of *knowledge* and *interpretation*; by the teaching of these men if it was diligently heeded, all Divine truth might possibly be received by some others in the next Generation, who had capacities of understanding them; but I have no reason to judge that these were multitudes. And the love of God, and his truth, would excite all the faithful (as they had opportunity) both to indeavour to know all truth of God, and also firmly to receive and declare it; but this will not free them from all ignorance, or capacity of erring.

5. The third ground is many waies imperfect, and reacheth not to the proof of the case in hand; for *first*, it is not enough to prove *Tradition indefectible*, to know that fears and hopes when strongly applied will have this effect; but we must know that in all Ages they were thus strongly applied to the generality of testifiers, or to the greatest number of the *Church visible*: but alas! how evident is it that in all Ages, the causes of hope and fear, have not been so applied by very great numbers in the Church, that they should take due care of their souls by a holy life? And since

since the Devil oft designs the perverting the Doctrine of Christ; as well as corrupting the practice of Christians, and they who reject a good Conscience, are in a ready way to make shipwrack of the Faith, what possible security can be given, that those Motives, hopes and fears, are a firm security to preserve Doctrine? *Secondly*, though it is not to be doubted, but that many pious men would be affected with such hopes and fears, who had this Doctrine delivered to them; yet considering that such pious men if considered as Fore-Fathers, might have careless and wicked Children; or as Priests and Teachers, might have careless and irreligious Successors; there must needs appear very great danger, that in any family or place, this *Tradition* will not be in every Age faithfully continued, by the prevalency of such hopes and fears. Nor is this only a Notion, since it is certain that a very great part of the Christian Church, did in the Primitive times entertain the *Arian Heresie*, and promoted it, and taught it to their Children. And since it is evident, that gross ignorance and sensuality hath reigned in some Ages more late, among the generality both of Clergy and People in the *Romish Church*: there can be from this ground no rational security given, that any great part of the deliverers were conscientiously careful, to deliver faithfully, according to what they had received, because it appears they did not act, as men prevailed upon by such hopes and fears would do.

His last ground likewise is unsound: for in the way of *Tradition*, all Divine truth cannot be evidenced to be knowable; not only because (as is abovesaid) much may be undelivered by the truly faithful, and much perversely delivered by the corrupt, and much mistaken: but even that also which in the way of *Oral Tradition* is delivered by the best deliverers, cannot in all things be clearly discovered to be a sufficient *Tradition*. For *first*, we cannot know whether the best deliverers now in the World in this Oral way, do deliver sufficiently that which was by the former Generation to them declared: for this must either be in a 6.

form of words received from the Apostles, or without such a form: if they deliver the Apostles very words, it cannot be doubted, but then the sense intended by the Apostles is as fully delivered as the Apostles themselves delivered it; since the same words must needs signifie the same things. But they who reject the way of Scripture-delivery, as the *Rule of Faith*, pretend not to any such form of words which should contain all truth. But a delivery without a form of words, is only a delivery of what is conceived, judged, or apprehended to be the sense of the former Generation; and this is a way liable to error, because it relies on the skill of every Generation; or the way of framing thoughts and conceptions of all these truths; and likewise upon a skill of fully expressing such conceptions in words, after they are rightly framed in the mind; and both these parts of art must be secured in the most exact manner, to every succession of deliverers. Now as it is not certain, that in all Ages there hath been a readiness of full expression of what they conceived to be truth; so for certain Controversies and Disputes, they shew in many things, that mens apprehensions are not unerrable. *Secondly*, if it had been certain, that some in the late past Generations, did deliver all truths fully; yet in the way of *Oral Tradition*, it cannot be known evidently who they are, and which is that true *Tradition*: for all men acquainted with Church History know, that when there have been differences amongst great Doctors of the Church in their delivery, this hath sometimes occasioned the calling of Councils to determine them, and declare which is the Doctrine to be held in the Church, as about the Religious use of *Images*, in the *eighth Century*, and many other cases. Now before the determination of such a *Council*, it is not evident which are the true deliverers, from the way of *Tradition*, since both parties contend for their own delivery; and no other Rule of Trial must be admitted according to this Discourser, but *delivery* or *Tradition*: and upon the former considerations it appears, that the best deliverers

verers may be the fewest. And this may be as uncertain after a *Council*, since there is nothing else to ascertain us; but the vote of a major part, which in many *Councils*, hath certainly been the worser part, and maintained *Heresie*; and therefore so it may be in others, where there can be no evidence given to the contrary. And by *Determinations* of *Councils*, the lesser part and their Adherents, are determined to reject their way of delivery, and receive the other; and by this means the lesser number, which may be in the truth, must disclaim their own sense and judgment, to submit to the judgment of others, which may be in the wrong, and so the true *Tradition* may be lost.

Yet that it may appear more evident, how vain the pretence to demonstration in this Discourse is, I shall applie his way of demonstrating, to some other *cases*, which it will fit as well as *Romish Tradition*. It is certain that after *Moses*, the true Doctrine was dispersed among the *Jews*, and after *Noah*, who was a Preacher of righteousness amongst his Sons: they had the greatest hopes and fears to ingage them to this truth, and these are the causes of actual will, and the *truths* are knowable; therefore both *Gentile Tradition* from *Noah*, and *Jewish* from *Moses*, were indefectible, according to this Discourser's Principles; and so the true Religion may at this time be found, either among *Gentiles* or *Jews*. Yea, it was certain, that Gods will was declared to *Adam* and *Eve* in Paradise, and to the *Angels* that fell, before their fall, and they had the greatest hopes and fears, to perswade them to keep to this will of God; knowing that obeying it, was their happiness, and deserting it their ruine: these hopes and fears are the causes of actual will, and the duties themselves both knowable and practicable, and they had no corrupt inclinations to sway them; therefore according to this demonstrator, *Adam* and *Eve*, and all the *Angels*, did continue in their obedience. The same way of demonstration would prove that never any *Heresies* could either be broached, or by many be received in the Christian Church: 7.

But in these cases, who sees not that it will be answered, that either the truths of God declared, were not sufficiently heeded, or else the causes of hope and fear were not sufficiently applied, and at all times acknowledged and observed; and that in such cases there was a corruption either in belief or in practice: but then every eye will see, that this might as well be imagined in the *Romish Church*, as in any other company of men. So that he hath made it as clear, that the *Romish Tradition* is indefectible, as that the *Gentile* and *Jewish Traditions* were, and are; and as certain as it is, that there is no *Devil* or *fallen Angel*, and no *fall* of man, and consequently no *sin* in the World, and no *Heresie* ever in the Christian Church. But here it is needful to do this Authour that right, as to observe his unusual modesty, that he intitles this Discourse not a demonstration, but an indeavouring to demonstrate.

8. §. 6. He speaketh to this purpose. *If any shall object, Original Corruption indisposeth Parents wills; since Christs Doctrine was intended to be an Antidote for that Original malice; to say it is universally applied, and preserves none good, is to question Christs wisdom: and many thousands, Martyrs and Confessors, did hereby overcome the declivity of their wills. Again, nature cannot incline all to this sort of sin, to teach their Children what they think will damn them, but most strongly carries them to the contrary.* To this I may in the first place observe, that neglects of duty might be, if there had been no Original corruption; as was in *Adam* in *Paradise*, and in the *Angels*, where was no antecedent sinful inclination, but they were only capable of sinning. Yet I assert, there is more danger by Original corruption, and its prevalency both as to the Will and Understanding. Now *Christs* Doctrine is indeed a poise or Antidote against this, yet this is *first*, where this Doctrine is carefully entertained and retained, but not so, that there should be no fear of its being retained in any Church. S. *Paul* did not nourish needless fears.

fears for his *Corinthians*, who had this Doctrine, lest *their minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ*: nor were they untrue complaints of his *Galatians*, Chap. 3. 1. *Who hath bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth?* And we *Protestants* can discern nothing to shew that this Doctrine must needs be otherwise a poise in the *Romish Church*, than in the *Corinthian* or *Galatian*. *Secondly*, where this Doctrine is retained, it is a poise against *Original corruption* in a considerable degree, yet not so as to remove all imperfections proceeding from Original sin, which may hinder right delivery of all truth: for though in some excellent persons there be a willingness to deliver truth; yet there may be some mistake even in holy Martyrs and Confessors. The *Church* of *Rome* as well as *we*, own *Cyprian* as a *Saint* and *Martyr*, and yet acknowledge him to have erred, and most *Africans* then with him, in delivering that they who were Baptized by *Hereticks*, ought to be rebaptized; so that in following good men, there may be mistake: but they are more like to err, if they be bad, as many certainly are. But concerning his last clauses, it is no way necessary to suppose, that to *invalidate Tradition*, *Parents must design to teach Children what they think will damn them*: we suppose very many may design truth and good, who yet may be in error; yet there may be others who through prevalency of corruption in themselves, may design to corrupt the truth, and may teach their Children so; and all this out of that Principle that prevails with men to wicked lives, which is not a design to damn themselves, but a design to gratifie their evil affections. S. *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 2. 17. speaks of many who *corrupt the word of God*; and S. *Peter* foretells of others, *who shall bring in damnable Heresies*, and we know the *Jews* did teach their Children to worship *Baalim*: most probably this was not out of design to damn them: however we know no demonstrations to prove that *Romanists* have higher affections to their Children naturally, than

than *Jews* had; or that when there is danger of truth being corrupted in the *Christian Church*, they of the *Romish* should be exempted from liableness to that danger.

9. §. 7. He thus proceeds; *If any object, the fickle nature of the will*; (he answers) *Good is the object of the will. Now infinite goods and harms sufficiently proposed, are incomparably more powerful causes to carry the will, than temporal ones: therefore a world of Believers cannot be willing to do that which would lose them and their Posterities infinite goods, and bring them infinite harms.* To this I answer; That if this be spoken of the generality of professed Christians, these words would still as much plead against *Adams* fall, and the corruptions of *Gentiles* and *Jews*, as against defection in the *Romish Church*; since all these had the greatest goods and harms proposed to them. But I further answer; That a considerable number in former Ages, would indeavour to know and deliver truth aright, but they still are liable to mistakes, and others that hear them, to misunderstandings; and also it is possible, that the subtilty of some Deceivers may take place, and be received sooner than their delivery of truth, by which means those truths may many of them be lost or perverted; and even in these last Ages I doubt not but even in the *Roman Church*, there are many who would desire good, and love truth (and therefore as they have discerned it, many have forsaken the *Romish* way; but they who most desire to find it, can in the way of *Tradition*, see no more than is there to be seen: and if others by subtilty corrupt some of that; it is not in the power of these honest meaning persons, to hinder the prevalency of such corruptions, if they be promoted by a more potent party and interest.

10. §. 8. If any think the proposal of Sensible Objects, *more considerable than of Spiritual, he indeavoureth to shew the excellent proposal of the truths of God, and thereby evidenceth they may be applied.* This doth not much concern

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Protestants. we acknowledge that there is nothing wanting as to the proposal of Gods truth, but yet there was in many, neglect of receiving what was sufficiently propounded; whence followed all the abovementioned miscarriages. And even God himself propounded his truths as he thought most meet; that is, he proposed such as were not so necessary for all to know, more mysteriously, whence many might be ignorant of them, or misapprehend: but other necessary truths he propounded with abundant evidence and plainness. But in the present way of *Tradition*, what this Authour observes, to make the proposal evident, is very imperfect; *for though they have obvious Metaphors, daily Practices, Language and Actions, Sacraments and Ceremonies:* yet these things may themselves partake of corruptions, and then may help to clear what is propounded, that somewhat may be understood; but not withal to secure that this is certainly from God, and therefore is Divine truth: Nor do most of these things reach all truth to be delivered, nor secure from all misapprehension, so far as they are intended to signifie truth, in such matters as are more difficult and mysterious.

An Answer to his seventh Discourse, *concerning Heresie.*

1. §. 1. HE observes, *That that which seems only and mainly to prejudice his Argument is, that there have been Hereticks, or deserters of Tradition: but* he saith, *it sufficeth that the Causes to preserve Faith intire, are as efficacious as those laid for the Propagation of mankind, the only subject of Faith,* and *more particulars fail in propagating their kind, than their Faith.* In answer to this, I *first* observe, that though it much destroyes the grounds laid by this Authour, to observe that there have been *Heresies*, and those much spread in the Church; yet this is not the only prejudice against his Argument: for if we had never heard of, or could make no proof of any *Heresies* in the *Christian Church*; yet from considering the very nature of *Oral Tradition*, as hath been shewed in the former Discourse, and from observing what great defects were in it, both amongst *Gentiles* and *Jews*, it is sufficiently manifest, that it is not indefectible, and hath not the certainty requisite to the *Rule of Faith*; by which means, if *Heresies* had not been, they might begin. But I further undertake to manifest, that because it is certain, that *Heresies* have spread in the *Church*, from this consideration it is evidenceable, that *Oral Tradition* is so defectible, as that it cannot be a sure *Rule of Faith*. His paralleling *Tradition* with the propagation of mankind, is a meer piece of *sophistry*. For if he indeed assert, that the causes to preserve Faith intire in the way of *Tradition*, are as sufficient, as those to propagate mankind in the intire nature of man, he must then either acknowledge that there have been oft Societies of persons of different natures both in themselves, and from mankind, who are brought up

up amongst men, and call themselves men, and propagate in their kind, and cannot by the eye be distinguished from men, and are capable of deceiving great multitudes by perswading them that they are the true men, and that others are not; or else he must deny that ever any such *Hereticks* have been in the *Church*, who have declared themselves, and have been owned by many others, to be the true Christians, and holders of the truth. The case of *Tradition* and Propagation are wonderfully different also, in that he who hath the nature of man in him by Propagation, cannot alter this nature, and make himself of another nature at his own pleasure; whereas it is very possible for such as have imbraced the true Christian Doctrine, to forsake it, and fall aside into *Heresies*, as hath been oft evidenced in the World: and also in that those particular persons in mankind, who do not propagate their kind, are not capable at their pleasure, of propagating any thing different from man: but in the way of Christian Faith, they who do not propagate the true Faith, may, and many of them do propagate error, and that so subtilly, that very many are oft deluded by it. Yea, this *Discourser* himself §. 2. acknowledgeth, that he knows the multitudes of *Hereticks* which have from time to time risen, makes this his Position seem incredible; and therefore I infer, that unless his Reader can be assured that this Position is more true than it seems to be, he must from his own words, conclude it really incredible.

§. 2. He comes to consider how an *Heresie* is bred, where he tells us; *The Church is to be considered as a Commonwealth under Discipline, having Officers to take care that all Motives be actually applied; and because it is impossible the perfection of Discipline should extend it self to every particular; some by pride, ambition, lust, and itching desire of followers, may propose new tenets, which by their plausibleness and licentiousness, if Governours be not watchful, may suit with the humour of divers, and draw them into the same faction. Thus a body is made inconsiderable in respect of the* 2.

whole; The Church stands upon the uninterrupted succession of her Doctrine. They cry the Church hath erred in Faith, and disgrace Tradition. A new Rule is sought for either by private inspiration or waxen natured words. They study wordish Learning and Criticisms, and whilst the Traditionary Christian hath the appellation of Catholick, they must be content with other names, as Lutherans, Zuinglians, Protestants, *&c.* He who observes the former part of this Paragraph, will find it to be an acknowledging all his former Discourse ineffectual: for if the formerly mentioned *Motives* may want application, if *Discipline* be neglected, and *false tenets* may be taking, if *Governours* be not vigilant; than all the pretended security of truth being preserved in the way of *Oral Tradition*, must depend upon the supposed goodness, and care of such persons, as are to administer the *Discipline* of the *Church*: and since there have been many bad *Councils*, it is certain there have been bad and careless *Church Governours*, and there cannot any security be given, that these *Governours* might not sometimes cherish the false Doctrines, and oppose the true: and thereby the more effectually destroy the way of *Oral Tradition*. But though there may be defection from truth; this *Discourser* here seems to venture, to find a way how the deliverers of *Tradition* may be known. I will now examine all his Characters above recited.

3. *First*, They who forsake truth, are not alwaies an inconsiderable number in respect of the other: When the ten Tribes served the Calves in *Dan* and *Bethel*, they were a greater number than those who remained to Worship at *Jerusalem*. In *Elijah*'s time it was in *Israel*, but a small number in comparison of the whole that did not bow their knees to *Baal*. In the time when Christ was first manifested in the flesh; the *Dissenters*, from the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, in their pernicious Doctrines, were not the greater number: and when *Arianism* most prevailed, the greater part of the Christian Church did acknowledge and own it for truth: so that if the greater number have

have oft imbraced false Doctrine in points of Faith, there can be no evidence from such numbers, which is the true Doctrine. *Secondly*, Nor can the Professors of the true Doctrine be known, by standing upon an *uninterrupted succession of Doctrine* publickly attested, (if by this he understands, as he must, the *Oral*, and not the *Scriptural* way of attesting; though even in the latter, some may stand upon having what they have not, and so likewise in the former) for by this Rule the *Scribes* and *Phasees*, and *Talmudists*, who stand upon a constant succession of their Doctrine from *Moses* and *Ezra*, must be acknowledged to hold truth, where they differ from, and contradict the *Apostles* and *Christians*: nor can there be any reason, why standing upon *Tradition* from Christ, should be a security for truth, when standing upon *Tradition* from *Moses*, who was a faithful deliverer, was no security: yea, by this Rule, as hath been before observed, *Paganism* would be defended for a true Religion, and the *Jews* worshipping of *Baalim*, and in the Christian state the *Heresie* of *Artemon*, denying the Divinity of Christ: since all these pretended a right to the most publick and open way of *Oral Tradition*. *Thirdly*, Nor are they to be accounted for *Hereticks*, who make use of *Criticisms*; for though nothing more than common reason and capacity, is necessary to understand the main Doctrines of Christian Faith; yet if all the users of *Critical Learning* in matters of *Religion* or points of *Faith*, were to be condemned for *Hereticks*; then not only Learned *Protestants*, but all the most eminent *writers* among the *Papists*, must be accounted *Hereticks*; yea, and even all the *Fathers*, who have left any Books to us of considerable bigness, must be taken into the number. Yea, the blessed Apostle S. *Paul* made use of *Critical* observation against the leven of the false Apostles, in the *Churches* of *Galatia*, Gal. 3. 16. *To Abraham and his Seed were the promises made, he saith not unto Seeds, as of many; but as of one; And to thy Seed, that is Christ.* Yet I suppose this *Discourser* will not dare to say, that S. *Paul* was in the er-

ror or *Heresie*, because he made use of *Criticisms*; and his opposers in the truth, who pleaded a successively delivered Doctrine amongst the *Jews*.

4. *Fourthly*, Nor can the true receivers of Christian Doctrine, be known by being called *Catholicks*: for *first*, though the name of a *Catholick* be deservedly honoured by *Christians*, and the persons who truly answer that name, yet it was not the name, whereby the *Apostles* did first call them, who held the true Christian Faith, but they were called *Christians*: yea, some both of the *Ancients* and of the Learned *Moderns*, assert, that this name of *Catholick*, was not at all in use in the *Apostles* daies: however that which then was not the chief name, commonly applied to them who hold the truth, can by no shew of reason be proved to be now the Character, to know which hold the true Faith. *Secondly*, is it necessary they must be called *Catholicks* by all men, or only by themselves, and men of their own way? if it be sufficient, that they of their own way call them *Catholicks*; then even the *Arians* must be acknowledged to have held the truth, who published their Confession in the presence of *Constantius* under the name of the *Catholick Faith*, as is asserted by *Athanasius*, *De Synodis Arim.* and *Seleucia*, and by this Rule *Papists* indeed will come in: but if this was enough, who sees not that it would be in the power of any party of men; to evidence to the world, that their *Heresies* are truths; by their declaring themselves by the name of *Catholicks*? But if it be necessary, that they must be generally called *Catholicks* by them who differ from them, then it would likewise follow, that it is in the power of the Adversaries of the truth, to take away from the holders of truth, that certain Character, whereby they may be known to hold truth, if they refuse to call these holders of truth by the name of *Catholick*; and it will likewise follow, that their holding of truth must be judged of by the opinions or words of opposers, and not from their own Doctrines and Positions. And yet by this Rule

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the *Papists* must not be owned for holders of the truth: for *Protestants* do not generally give them the name of *Catholicks*, nor acknowledge them to be truly such; but to be *Schismaticks*. We indeed oft call them by the name of *Roman Catholicks* or *Pseudocatholicks*; and when ever any *Protestants* call them *Catholicks*, they mean those who call themselves so, and would be so owned; in the same manner as our *Saviour* called the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* Builders, saying he was the stone, which the *builders* refused. *Thirdly*, Nor is it possible, there should be any such latent virtue in the name *Catholick*, to shew who hold the truth, more than was in the Old Testament, in being called the *Children* of the *Prophets*, and the *Covenant* which God made with *Abraham*, the *followers* of *Moses*, and the *Keepers* of the Law: which were terms applied to the *unbelieving Jews*, in and after the times of Christ.

Fifthly, Nor is it the mark of an *Heretick*, to be called by some other appellation than that of *Catholick*; for if to be called so by their opposers, would prove them *Hereticks*; then when ever the truth hath any foul mouthed Adversary, who would nick-name its Professors, the truth it self must be owned for an *Heresie*; but must the true holders of Christianity be called *Hereticks*, because the *Jews* called them *Nazarens*, *Edomites*, *Epicureans*, and the like; The *Montanists*, as we may learn from *Tertullian*, called the true Christians *Psychicos*, or carnal ones; the *Arians* called them who held the Faith of *Nice*, *Homoousiasts*, *Athanas. Dial. de Trin.* and *Julian*, by a Law commanded Christians to be called *Galilæans*, *Naz. Orat. 3. cont. Julian.* But if he mean that they who call themselves by other names, are *Hereticks*; this is as vain a way of Trial as the former: for though he intends it against *Protestants* who own that name of *Catholick*, and account themselves such; it will conclude for *Hereticks* all who own themselves *Papists*, *Jesuits*, *Romanists*, *Dominicans*, *Jansenists*, *Molinists*, and such like, as much as Protestants.

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6. §. 3. He saith, *After a while the pretended Rule of Scriptures Letters self-sufficiency is thrown by as useless. Children are taught that they are to believe their Pastors and Fathers, and to guide themselves by their sense in reading Scripture; which is the very way Catholicks ever took. If any follow their own judgement, and differ from the Reformers, these if they have power will oblige them to act, (which if conscientiously is) to hold as they do; else they will punish and persecute them; which shews that it is not the letter of Gods word, but these mens interpretations, which is thought fit to guide to Faith, whence,* he saith, *follow self-contradictions.* But is this the farther description of an *Heretick*, to reject the pretended Rule of Scripture, when most *Hereticks* never pretended it to be a Rule; some went in this *Discoursers* way of *Tradition*, as was shewed *Disc.* 4. *n.* 15, and shall be further shewed in answer to his Authorities. Almost all, if not all *Hereticks* in the first Ages of the Church, rejected Scripture. *Eusebius Hist. Eccl. lib.* 3. *c.* 28. notes, that *Cerinthus* a notorius *Heretick*, was an enemy to the *Scriptures* of God. *Origen* in the end of *lib.* 5. *contra Cels.* observes that the *Ebionites* of both sorts, rejected the *Epistles* of S. *Paul*, and *Euseb. Hist. Eccl.* 3. *c.* 27. saith, *they esteemed none of the Gospels; but that which was called the Gospel according to the Hebrews, they received.* Yea, it was the Charge which the *Catholick Christians* laid against the *Hereticks*, condemned by the four first *General Councils*, that they would not hearken to the Scriptures, nor reverence them, as shall in due place appear. This S. *Austin* oft condemns in the *Manichees*, and chargeth some *Donatists*, *contr. Fulgentium Donatist.* with burning the *Gospels* as things to be rased out, and *Athanasius Epist. ad Orthodox.* testifies that the *Arians* did burn the Books of the *holy Scripture*, which they found in the *Church*. But however he hath a design in this 3. §. to shew that the followers of *Hereticks* (under which name he chiefly intends *Protestants*) do in practice disown the Scripture rule as insufficient, and close with, and build upon the way of *Tradition*;

on; whence he would make evident that by the common acknowledgement of all men, no other way of receiving the Doctrine of Faith can be owned but this only.

I shall here shew in what he criminates *Protestants* to be false; but before I come to answer on the behalf of *Protestants*, to the things here charged on them, and the *self-contradictions* pretended, (for though he talks of *Heresie* in this Discourse, it is easie to observe his only aim is not at *Hereticks*, but at *Protestants*, that is, at truly *Catholick Christians*) I shall observe, that what he hath declared in this Paragraph, is a very effectual way to shew *Oral Tradition* no *Rule of Faith*, nor so much as a probable way to discern *truth*: for if they who desert *Tradition* or Doctrines delivered by it, may require their Children to guide themselves by their sense: if this be possible, as indeed it is, and this *Discourser* here asserts as much: it can never be demonstrated that this hath not been the practice of the present *Romish Church*, and that many things now delivered as truths in their way of *Tradition*; were not *Heresies* or *errors*, broached by some mens fancies in a former *Generation*, who required their Children to follow their sense. Yea, besides this, if it be the general way of *Heresie*, (as this Authour here asserts) to promote their Heretical tenets in the way of *Oral Tradition*, it will be beyond the skill of this Authour, (unless he shall retract this description of *Heresie*) to give the least assurance to any reasonable men, that the *Roman Church*, which goes on in the way of *Oral Tradition*, is not upon this account of *Tradition*, to be much suspected of holding *Heresies*. Yea, it will hence also the more effectually follow, that it is impossible that *Hereticks* should be discerned from the holders of the true Faith, if there were no other Rule to discover this, but *Oral Tradition*; since this Discourser asserts, that this very Rule, *Hereticks* generally close with, in the propagation of *Heresie*, at a distance from its first original. Yea, and it will 74

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tend much to the justifying of the *followers* of *Protestants*, if it shall appear, that they go not in the way of *Tradition*, which this Authour hath assured us, is the constant way the followers of all *Hereticks* run into. See both his §. 3. and §. 5.

8. I answer now to this 3. §. that *Protestants* do not at all throw aside the *Scripture Letters Self-sufficiency* as a Rule. I suppose this *Discourser* cannot be ignorant, that while we own *Scripture* a *Rule of Faith*, we acknowledge the necessary and principal Doctrines thereof, to be so clear and intelligible in Scripture, that they may without actual error be comprized in some form of sound words; such as are *Creeds*, *Confessions of Faith*, *Articles*, *Catechisms*, or the like: and we do acknowledge and assert these truths, even so many as are necessary to the Salvation of all the *adult* in the Church, to be infallibly evident to the judgements and understandings of men, from the fulness and plainness of their proposal in Scripture. *Protestants* will require Children to receive such things as these, as certain truths, from the Pastors or Parents, not because they are from their Fathers or Teachers, but because they are things certainly by them discerned to be in Scripture: and till these Children are able to search and discern the same themselves, their Parents or Teachers knowledge is a very considerable Motive to them to own such truths as clear in Scripture. And this is a knowledge as certain, as they are capable of, until they come themselves to peruse and understand the Scripture; yea, it is certain enough to them to command their assent, as certain as other things are, which credible persons attest upon their eye-sight. For in what I plainly discern, I as surely know that I read such a Position in a Book, as that I hear or see other things in converse in the world. Now since what is thus delivered by *Protestants* to their Children, is so delivered, because it appears to be the Scripture-Doctrine; this is an establishing and holding to, not a rejecting and throwing by the Scripture as a Rule.

But

But while we own Scripture as a Rule, there is no more reason why *Protestants* should tolerate men to contradict what is plainly and evidently deducible from Scripture, under pretence of holding to it as a Rule; than there is that in a case of *Rebellion*, one who is to indeavour to suppress the *rebellion*, should be suffered to assault the *King*, when he plainly appears to be the *King*, under pretence that he took him to be a *Rebel*. Yet as to matters not fully clear in Scripture, *Protestants* do allow differences of Opinion, if managed peaceably; and that it may appear that we are not violent prosecutors of our own apprehensions, only because they are so: the *Laws* of *England* condemn nothing for *Heresie*, but that which was so declared, by one of the *four first General Councils*.

But what he intimates of *obliging to act, that is, (if with good conscience) to hold as themselves do*; makes me think he designs chiefly to reflect upon *prudential constitutions*, such as are amongst us, the *Oaths of Obedience* and *Supremacy*, and matters of *Liturgy* and *Conformity*. But in none of these things do *Protestants* desert this Principle of Scripture being the *Rule of Faith*. For Protestants who hold this assertion, never intended to exclude the use of prudential Rules and Constitutions, for the advantage both of *Civil* and *Ecclesiastical* Societies; but such Constitutions they neither own nor press as matters of Faith, nor as Gods Commands in themselves necessary to salvation. In this case, if Protestant Rulers oblige to nothing as prudential, orderly, and decent, but what they are well satisfied that it is lawful according to Gods word, and agreeable thereunto, and for other ends expedient, and not needlesly burthensome, (which appears the common case of all *Protestant Churches*) they no way swerve from Scripture-Rule. Yea, if here any *Protestant* Rulers should err, and urge as lawful, decent and prudential, what is indeed sinful and evil; in this case they sin, and practically swerve from the true Rule, as men do in all acts of sin and mistakes of judgement; but they do in no wise intentional- 9.

ly disown this Rule of Scripture; since they hold fast this as a firm Principle, that if any thing which they require to be practised as lawful, can be fully manifested to be against Scripture, they will rather reject that Constitution, than oppose the Scripture, and will acknowledge that their Subjects ought to obey the Scripture rather than such commands.

10. But he tells us, That these *Dissenters* (*from Protestants*) *do guide themselves, to their best capacity by the Scriptures Letter, which is the Rule their persecutors* (*Protestants*) *who punish them* (for not obeying) *taught them, and made use of themselves when they brake from the* (Romish) *Church.* I answer, 1. It is much to be feared, that many who dissent from the *Protestant Churches*, in these matters prudential, do not act according to their best capacities; but some from *passion* and *self-will*, some from the *applause* of a *party*; others from *pride*, and a *sinful resolution* not to disown what they once unadvisedly and erroneously took up. 2. Yet I doubt not, but very many who dissent from the prudential Rules of the *Protestant Churches*, or particularly of the *Church of England*, do act according to the best light they have of Scripture truth; yet have they not the same reasons and grounds to justifie them, that *Protestants* have to justifie themselves in departing from *Popery*; for we rejected *Popery*, not only because we could not discern whether it was *lawful* or not by the Scripture-Rule; but because in matters plain in Scripture, we did clearly discern it *sinful* by clear Scripture-evidence, which plain evidence *Dissenters* from the *Church of England* cannot have; nor can they pretend it, unless it be *rashly* under *passion*, or *preconceived prejudice*. But for those who act according to the best light they have from Scripture, which will suppose them willing to be better informed, we *Protestants* no way dislike, but highly approve of their Rule, and of them for designing to follow it, so far as we can discern such persons. And as the *Protestant Doctrine* asserts, that all things necessary to salvation, are plain in Scripture,

Scripture; so we doubt not but these persons, and all other, who according to their best capacities close with the Faith there delivered, and practise the duties there required, are in the way to salvation, nor can they err in matters fundamental. But still they may err in some other matters, and particularly about the lawfulness of some things prudential; nor did Protestants ever assert, that they who designed to follow Scripture to the best of their light, could in nothing be subject to error, where they have not a discovery of clear evidence, which in all things all inquirers may possibly not attain. Yet I must further declare, that if this design, of following Scripture according to mens best capacity were more followed, and all *passions*, *prejudices*, and unchristian *suspicions* laid aside amongst all *Dissenters*, the number of them who dissent from the *Protestant Churches*, upon the best light of Scripture they have, would in a short time be reduced to a very few. 3. Where in any case, such persons as these are punished, it is not for designing to follow Scripture, but for not obeying some prudential lawful commands, in a case where their mistake is the cause of their not obeying; nor is it any more a condemning their design to follow Scripture, than in Civil *Laws* and *Constitutions*, when any one is impleaded in a *Court*, because he for want of *good Counsel*, acts what he by mistake thinks to be according to *Law*; but is cast as not having acted according to the *Law*, the *Judge* should be thought to punish this man unjustly, because he designed obedience to the *Law*; yea, to punish him for designing this obedience to the *Law*. Some such inconveniences as these, are like to be in *Civil* things, while men are liable to mistakes, and something is capable of being mistaken: but these things concern not at all the *Rule of Faith*, or the rejecting the Scripture from being the *Rule of Faith*.

From what hath been said, it is ease to vindicate the *Protestants*, from the following *self-contradictions*, he chargeth upon *Hereticks*. The first of which is to *reform upon* II.

pretence of Scriptures Letter being the Rule; and afterwards in practice to desert that Rule, in their carriage towards others. This Rule *Protestants* desert not, since they propound nothing to be assented to by any as a matter of Faith, but what they judge certainly evident in Scripture; nor require they any thing to be practised as orderly, but what they discern or judge not contrary to Scripture. 2. Nor do we disallow to others the *grounds our selves proceed upon:* for we allow to all, and commend in all, their practice upon clear and well grounded Scripture-evidence, but we neither allow our selves, nor others, to practise upon ungrounded pretences of Scripture being on our side. The *Third* pretended contradiction is, *To pretend first the Scriptures Letter clear of it self, without needing the Church to interpret it, and afterwards to judge the followers of it to their best power to go wrong; that is, to confess it obscure, and to need their new Church's interpretation.* But *Protestants* do assert, that in all *necessary* Doctrines the evidence of *Scripture* is so clear, that it needs no interpretation; nor can they be denied, but by preferring interest, passion, or some other fond conceptions above *evidence;* and this is to forsake *Scripture:* but in many other things they who do not discern the *evidence* of *Scripture,* may err, though they follow it to their best power; but notwithstanding this, Scripture is sufficiently clear in the *evidence* it gives of all Divine revealed truth, to them who do discern its *evidence;* though men be confessed to be men; and many of them not capable of full understanding many truths. His *Fourth* contradiction charged on *Hereticks,* but designed for *Protestants,* is, that they *persecute others, for taking that way, which they held (at least pretended) meritorious in themselves:* in which charge, as the thing intended is palpably false concerning *Protestants,* so the language he useth agreeth not to them. The *Fifth* pretended contradiction is, to oblige others to relinquish *the sole guidance of Scriptures Letter, and to rule themselves by their Tradition; and at the same time against Catholicks, to impugn Tradition as unfit to sense it, and*

abet

abet only the self-sufficiency of Scriptures Letter. The former clause here charged on *Protestants*, is no way their practice; for though in matters *prudential*, they require inferiours to be ruled by the commands of their Superiours; which both *Scripture* and the *Government* of all *Societies* in the World require; yet in matters of *Faith*, they require that men receive them only from *Scripture* as the *Rule of Faith*, or the main ground of belief. Nor are any *Protestants* in any case commanded to relinquish *Scripture* as a *Rule of Faith*, and to rule themselves by *Tradition*, more than if in a *Corporation*, a member who cannot read, hath his duty read to him by another out of the *Charter*, or told him in words, with great care collected out of the *Charter*, to express its sense; this should be called a commanding this man as a member of this Society to relinquish the sole guidance of the *Charter* as his Rule, and to be ruled by others *Tradition*, when he follows the *Charter* by the best evidence he hath concerning it, and relies not on a delivery of continued hearsaies, report, and fame, which is a way suitable to the *Romish Oral Tradition*. As to the latter part of this pretended Contradiction, which concerns the impugning *Tradition* as unfit to sense Scripture; if this be understood of the present way of *Romish Oral Tradition*, this indeed we do so impugn. But if this be understood of the *Ancient* and *Primitive Tradition*: Protestants do acknowledge this so far as it can be manifested to be general, to be very fit to sense such Scriptures as are otherwise difficult, and obscure; and so far as we have any intimations of such *Traditions*, by the Ancient *Fathers*, we own them useful.

The last pretended contradiction is, To *impute that carriage as a fault to our* (Romish) *Church, which themselves practice; and which is most material, our Church punishes none but those who desert our Rule, but they punish for too close following their Rule.* All the clauses of this charge, are guilty of deserting the Rule of Truth. For *Protestants* who fault this *Traditionary way*, do not practise this *Tradition*, 12.

tion, as hath been above shewed: nor do *Protestants* punish any for following Scripture too close, as hath been evidenced. The middle clause is likewise untrue: for if he mean, that the *Romish Church* never punisheth any, who pretend to hold to the *Tradition* they received, according to the best of their knowledge; how came it to pass that *Victor* excommunicated all the *Asian Churches*, for not keeping *Easter* the same day with the *Roman Church*; though these *Asian Churches* pleaded a certain *Tradition*, not only from their famous *Bishops*, but from *Philip* the *Deacon*, and his *Daughters*, which were *Propheteſſes*, and from S. *John the Apostle and Evangelist? Euſ. Hiſt. Eccl.* 5. *c.* 24. Yea, how came Mr. *White* to be censured at *Rome*, who thought he defended the Rule of *Tradition?* yea, how came *Monsieur Arnold* to be so troubled by the *Jesuits* in *France*, even for the using those words which he received from S. *Austin*, a famous and approved *Father?* But if he only mean that the *Church* of *Rome* punisheth none, but such as swerve some way from the *Traditions* she delivers, this, if true in it self, is nothing that can truly be called most material; it being neither pertinent to his charge against *Protestants*; nor considerable in it self, since it only speaks the *Church* of *Rome* commendable, in not punishing those, who believe every thing it saies, and practise every thing it commands: and was there ever any Society in the World, that in this thing was not as commendable as the *Church* of *Rome?* But when he here tells us, their *Church* punisheth none but those, who desert the Rule she recommends, surely he much forgat himself §. 5. where speaking of Hereticks, he saith that the deserters of the natural way of *Tradition*, have been but few, and the Descendents of these Revolters followed *Tradition*: for either he must say, that their *Church* punisheth no Descendents of Revolters, as he calls them; that is, allows all *Heresies* in any but the first Authours of them; or else must acknowledge that it punisheth them whom himself accounts (and there, as he thinks, proves that they are) not deserters of *Tradition*.

§. 4. He

§. 4. He asks, *What can follow hence, but that Subjects, whom common sense cannot but make exceeding sensible of such unreasonable carriage, in persecuting them purely for following Gods word, which themselves had taught them, they ought in conscience to follow; should strive to wreak their malice against their Persecutors, and to involve whole Nations in War, and Blood*: but he after adds, *he intends not a justification of those revolting Sects.* But it cannot be that common sense, nor any rational evidence, should teach Subjects under *Protestant Princes*, that they are persecuted purely for following Gods Word; since there is no such thing in truth, they can no otherwise think it is so, but by evident mistakes, or by such deluding perswasions, as this Authour would deceive them with. And indeed, such pernicious incentives as these of this Discourser, may possibly if they meet with fiery and malicious spirits, inflame them into a Rebellion, and withal shew what Principles may be instilled by pretenders to *Tradition*. But such is the peaceableness of this Principle of making Scripture our Rule, that if any Christians should live under such a Power, as this Author speaks of, should be a self-condemning tyranny over mens consciences; if in this case Subjects make Scripture their Rule, they must live in patience, meekness, peace, humility and subjection to the Higher Powers: and it must be from pride, wrath, passion, malice, and refusing to be subject, (all which are directly contrary to the Scriptures) that all Rebellion against Government must proceed. Whence amongst the Primitive Christians, where the Laws of their Persecutors commanded them the worship of a Deity, and yet punished them for worshipping the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and Christ his Son, with the holy Spirit, which is the only God, and the Christians knew there was none else: and punished them for not worshipping as Gods, them whom they knew were no gods; yet in this case, the Christian Principles which the Scripture delivers, kept them in all loyal subjection to their Governours. If this Principle of making Scripture every where 13.

where our Rule, both as to Faith and Life be prevalent, as it will guide us aright into the truth, so it will end all quarrels, silence all animosities and contentions, and would reduce the world to such a perfect state of quiet, peace, friendship and love, as never yet flourished upon the face of the Earth.

14. §. 5. He tells us, The use of this Discourse is, *to conclude the deserters of the way of Tradition, to be very few*; (to which he hath received our answer, §. 3.) *and the Cause laid to preserve Traditionary Christians is far more steady, than that laid to preserve mankind.* I have answered his comparison of *Tradition* and *Propagation*, §. 1. But if he will be so confident as to tell his *Reader*, that the way of *Tradition*, is as surely supported as the *Propagation* of mankind; I would only advise him to be so ingenuous, as to speak plainly out his meaning; and say, that as in mankind, the causes for keeping intire the nature of man are such, that no company in the World ever pretended themselves to be of the nature of man, who really were not; so the way to preserve *Tradition* is such, that no Society of men ever did pretend to have received and held this truth, when indeed they had it not: and if he would thus do, he might amuse his *Reader*, but would never deceive him; having before told him that there have been many *Hereticks* in the World, and that even amongst these, the way of continuing *Heresie*, is the propagating of it by the way of *Tradition*.

An

An Anſwer to his eighth Diſcourſe, *ſhewing, that uninterruptedneſs of* Tradition, *is not proved* à poſteriori.

§. 1. HE declares, *That he will trie to conclude the indeficiency of Tradition, from ſuch an effect as can only ſpring from Traditions indeficiency of its Cauſe.* §. 2. he ſaith, *this ſeems needleſs againſt Proteſtants, who yield the points of Faith we agree in, to have come down by this way of Tradition.* He preſſeth therefore from Proteſtants, a candid Anſwer to theſe *Queries.* 1. *Was not the Trinity, Incarnation, and all other Points in which we agree, held in all Ages ſince Chriſt by Gods Church?* 2. *whether, ſeeing thoſe points were held ever of Faith, Fathers did not actually teach Children ſo, or the former Age the latter? if ſo, they came down by Tradition.* 3. *By what virtue did Tradition perform this? and whether the ſame virtue was not as powerful to bring down other things, had any ſuch been.* 4. *Is there not a neceſſary connexion between ſuch a conſtant cauſe, and its formal effect? ſo that if its formal effect be thoſe Points received as delivered ever, the proper Cauſe muſt be an ever-delivery. But becauſe he fears, the Proteſtant will flie off here, he will follow his deſigned method.* Sure he rather ſuppoſed the Proteſtant could eaſily baffle theſe fancies, than that he would flie from ſuch ſhadows. 1.

To the 1. *Qu.* I anſwer, That if we indeed underſtand by *Gods Church*, that number of Chriſtians, who have intirely and conſtantly held all the Principles of Chriſtian Religion, they muſt needs have held theſe great truths likewiſe. But many have pretended to be *Gods Church*, who held them not. Nor hath this belief been 2.

alwaies preserved in the Churches who once imbraced it: since the *Eastern Churches*, who before received the true Doctrine of Christ, were drawn aside by the *Arian infection*, and denied those points: which shews *Tradition* not certainly enough to preserve these points, in any particular Church.

3. To the 2. *Qu.* I answer, That in the Church of God which ever held these points, *Fathers* did teach their *Children* these Doctrines, yet were they not only nor chiefly continued by the way of *Oral Tradition.* For the *Primitive* Christians made Scripture their Rule, as shall be after shewed, from their Writings; and *Fathers* taught *Children* chiefly then, by what they read and received by the writings of the *Scriptures.* And the Children of these Parents had not only their Parents teaching, but they had also the Scriptures read among them, and perused by them, and by this means in the *Primitive times* were these Doctrines continued. That the *Apostolical Doctrine* was continued in the *Church*, chiefly from the *Scriptures*, *Irenæus* testifies, even of those Primitive times. *Adversus Hæres. lib.* 4. *c.* 63. The Doctrine of the Apostles is the true knowledge, which is come even unto us, being kept without fiction by the most full handling of the Scriptures. That Christians then received their instruction in the Church, chiefly from Scriptures, he likewise sheweth, *lib.* 5. *c.* 20. where he exhorts to flie from the Opinion of the *Hereticks*, and flie unto the *Church*, and be brought up in its bosom, and be nourished by the Lord's Scriptures. *For* (saith he) *the Paradise of the Church is planted in this World: therefore the Spirit of God saith, Ye shall eat food of every tree of the Paradise*; that is, *eat ye of every Scripture of the Lord.* For very many more testimonies, and those very clear, I refer to what shall be purposely discoursed in answer to his consent of Authority. Yea, such was the esteem of the use of Scripture, that in the Primitive times, before their Children were taught matters of human literature, they were instructed in the holy

holy Scriptures. Thus was *Origen* brought up; *Euſ. Hiſt. Eccl. lib. 6. c. 3.* and *Euſebius Emiſſenus*, according to the common cuſtom of their Country in like manner firſt learned the Scriptures; *Sozom. Hiſt. Eccl. lib. 3. cap. 5.*

To his 3. *Qu.* Were it certain that theſe truths had been preſerved by the way of *Oral Tradition* only, in the true Church of God, (as indeed they have not been) yet this is not by any ſuch virtue in the way of Tradition, as would ſecure the right delivery of all other things. For this is wholly contingent in reſpect of *Tradition*, depending upon this ſuppoſal, that in ſuch a Society, it hath alwaies been rightly delivered, and rightly received; which is a contingency; and notwithſtanding the virtue of *Tradition* might have been otherwiſe, as appeared in the *Eaſtern Churches* under *Arianiſm*: Yea, the reaſon why theſe Doctrines are preſerved intire among the *Romaniſts*, is probably this, that as they have been and are delivered by them from the Scriptures, they are alſo delivered in certain forms of words; and in thoſe Creeds which were received from thoſe Ancient *Churches* and *Councils*, who were not erroneous, but agreed to the Scripture. Now whereas their *Tradition* directs to receive what hath been delivered, and the things delivered have been ſome by *Councils* truly *Catholick*, and other things by erroneous *Councils*; it may well be that *Tradition* may in ſome things deliver rightly; and yet either omit the delivery of other things, or deliver them amiſs. And if there had been nothing more, to have preſerved theſe Doctrines in the *Weſtern Church*, but what was in the neceſſary virtue of *Tradition*, the *Romiſh Church* (not here to mention any thing of *Arian Popes*) might have loſt theſe points as well as the *Eaſtern* long ſince did, where *Tradition* loſt this virtue of preſerving them. 4.

Now that it may appear how vainly this Diſcourſer would conclude the certainty of *Tradition*, from the things propounded in theſe *Queries*; I ſhall mention ſome paral- 5.

lel Cases, to which the substance of what is here questioned, may be applied. As, 1. Concerning *Gentilism*. To follow this Authour, I would ask, was not the Belief of a God, and what things we agree in, constantly preserved by *Tradition* among them? now by what virtue did *Tradition* perform this? may we not by the same virtue of *Tradition*, receive what they delivered concerning the way of Gods Worship? and would not this *Tradition* as well have continued all other things, if any such had been delivered? Thus it would plead for *Gentilism*. 2. How would this plead for *Judaism*. Did not *Tradition* amongst them continue till Christs time, the Doctrine of Circumcision, of the Sabbath, of Sacrifices, and of a Messias? and must they not needs be in the right, in all other matters of delivery, though they were condemned by Christ and his Apostles. 3. See how these *Queries* would plead against all possibility of forgetfulness. When I have read a Book over, and am certain I rightly remember some clauses in it, may I thence conclude, that by the same virtue of memory, I remember these, I should have remembred all other clauses, if there had been any? and therefore certainly there was no more in the Book than I can remember. Or if I should conclude, that because I am certain, that I remember some passages which happened when I was a Child; therefore by the same virtue that these things were delivered to my memory, I also remember aright all things then done: who would not see that this is a meer vain piece of *Sophistry*, since some things may be more fully understood than others, and more heedfully observed, the impression upon many occasions more deeply imprinted, and the remembrance of them more frequently repeated? whence some things may be remembered, and others not; and the same causes may be assigned in matters of Religion.

6. To his 4. *Qu.* I answer, Things may be received as delivered ever, when yet there was no ever-delivery which I will manifest in answer to the following ℘. where he would prove the contrary.

℘. 3. He

§. 3. He layes down this effect, *The present perswasion of Catholicks, that their Faith hath descended from Christ and his Apostles uninterruptedly; which must for its Cause, have Traditions Ever-Indeficiency.* §. 4. To prove this, he layes his first Principle, *That Age which holds Faith so delivered, cannot change, nor know any change of it; because no man, much less a whole Age, can hold contrary to knowledge, nor here change without knowledge.* To this I answer, That supposing the abovementioned perswasion, this may rise from other causes, besides *Traditions indeficiency:* Yea, this his first Principle to prove the contrary is very weak. For, *first*, it is very easie to conceive, that mistaken Explications of Points of Faith may be held by a present Generation as having been matters of Faith, *ever delivered*, and yet may be really different from the things delivered, and so include a change. This is the more apt to take place, if such explicated points seem plausibly declared, and are either abetted by men of great fame, or serve an interest: and this is as possible as it is for men to be deceived in their conceptions about things not in expres's terms delivered: since it is certain that many points now owned as matters of Faith in the *Romish Church*, were not expresly and in such terms delivered of old: yea, this Authour acknowledgeth as much, *p.* 206, 207. Many such explicated points have in *Councils* been declared to be *de fide*, though not only against the minds of many who before asserted the contrary, but of others who in the said *Councils* opposed it. *Secondly*, to deliver a Doctrine as from *Christ*, where they change or know some change of it, is much more probable in the *Roman Church*, than in others; if any ignorance possess the Leaders, or any interest and private designs take place upon some few of them. For since the *Tradition* which particular persons have received, must submit to the determination of a *Council*, or else must they be anathematized, how easie is it for 7.

for some point *de fide*, to be innovated; if the *Bishop of Rome*, and some few other men of note and fame, through mistaken zeal, or out of design, should indeavour the having such a Point declared as a matter of Faith, when he can send what *Bishops* he please, or create new ones, and many others may for want of circumspection, comply in order to peace, as some well disposed Bishops did unadvisedly with some of the *Arian* devices. And in this case, though there may be some withstanders, yet may they not be numerous, and therefore must sit still being overpowerred, and will think they ought in the end to consent, if they have received this Principle, which many *Papists* imbrace. That the determinations of such a *Council*, are to determine their private judgments, what is the Doctrine of the Church.

8. §. 5. His second Principle is, *No Age could innovate any thing, and deliver that thing as received by constant succession. For the end of delivering it as so received, must be to make the following Generation believe it. Now if a whole Age should conspire to tell such a lie, yet it is impossible it should be believed, since they cannot blot out all Monuments which might undeceive; and therefore the following Generation cannot believe, unless they will believe what they know to be otherwise.* This Second Principle is unsound, upon the same grounds with the other. For as hath been now shewed, there may happen such an innovation, by the mistake or non-attendance of a considerable number, especially in *Councils*, who sometimes are too readily guided by some few eminent leading men, who may act either out of mistake, or some of them out of design; and by these men, if in an allowed and confirmed *Council*, both the present and future Generation must be determined. But what he speaks of a future Generation easily discovering the *innovation*, makes me think he forgets himself. For how should the following Generation of *Catholicks* consistently with this Authours Principles, discover it? By former *Monuments?* But he in this Book declares, that they must not give heed

to

to any former private mens Writings, againſt the delivered Doctrine of the *Church* publickly atteſted. And if any publick Writing, though it be their own approved *Canons*, ſeem contrary; they muſt find ſuch interpretation as will agree with this declared Doctrine, and ſtick to it, though it be wreſted; ſo that whatſoever can be ſhewed from Hiſtory or Ancient *Doctors*, (as this Authour declares in his *Corollaries*) is to ſuch *Papiſts* of no account againſt *preſent Tradition*. See *Coroll.* 14. 16, 17. Yea, if you ſhall produce a great number of oppoſers, as may in many caſes eaſily be done, he will hold to the greater number in his preſent Council. If you produce him a former *Council* againſt any now received *Doctrine*, he muſt not rationally judge of the *Tradition*, but from the preſent *Tradition*, condemn that, if it cannot be otherwiſe interpreted, as *Heretical*. If you produce the *Eaſtern* or *Græcian*, or other Churches, as delivering otherwiſe; if this cannot by other means be evaded, they muſt not be acknowledged by *Romaniſts* for true Deliverers. But if we can produce an *approved General Council*; have we not now ſuch ſufficient Monuments to diſcover thereby what was the Doctrine of the Church: ſuch Councils our Diſcourſer calls the greateſt Authority in the *Catholick Church*, *p.* 129. Yet if the Council was approved, and by the *Roman* Church acknowledged both for Catholick and General, ſtill they have a device to reject whatever diſlikes them in ſuch a *Council*, by ſaying, that it is *ex parte approbatum*, and *ex parte reprobatum*; or, part of it rejected, and part of it received: by this device they reject part of the *Second General Council at* Conſtantinople, and the *Twenty eighth Canon of the Fourth General Council* at *Chalcedon*, which declares, that their Fathers gave Priviledges to the See of *old Rome*, becauſe that was the *Imperial City*; and therefore upon the ſame conſideration, they gave the ſame Priviledges to the See of *Conſtantinople*. And thus they have rejected others of old; as alſo part of the *Council* of *Conſtance*, and the *Council* of *Baſil* more lately, concerning the Authority,

ty and Power of the *General Councils* over the *Bishop* of *Rome*. Thus doth *Binius* and other *Papists*. So that no way remains for a *Papist* thus principled, to detect this Innovation where he hath contrary evidence: much less in many cases, where the matter now determined, hath not been so distinctly of old treated of: so that the *Roman Church* may innovate, and yet expect to be believed that the Doctrine was ever delivered. Provided, they take care not so palpably to contradict their own publick and former delivery, in such a way as no possible interpretation can make things consist one with the other. If they do take this care, there is room enough left, for many innovations in Doctrine, in points not clearly enough determined formerly, in the publick Monuments of that *Church*; and in those also by misinterpretations. But though *Papists* consistently with their Principles, can make no discovery of Innovations, but must either make use of strained interpretations of former Writers, or else must condemn those Writers; yet *Protestants* can, and do make this discovery. And blessed be God that they of the *Romish Church*, have not so blotted out the Writings of the Ancient Fathers, (though they have shewed some good will thereto) nor have they been able so to correct the Letter of the Scripture, according to their own sense, (as this Authour thinks convenient *Cor.* 29.) but that we are able from them to discover the *Error* and *Apostasie* of the *present Church* of *Rome*: of which in the close of this Discourse, I will give him one instance.

9. §. 6. From these Principles he concludes, *That since nothing new could be owned, as not new in any Generation (by the first), nor a foregoing Age make it received as not new by Posterity by the second; therefore since we hold it descended uninterruptedly, it did descend as such.* To this I answer; That if the former Principles had been both true, as neither of them are; yet would not this conclusion have followed from them, because it supposeth besides these Principles, many other things to be true, which are either very improbable

probable or certainly false. *First*, it supposeth that all points held as matters of Faith, have in all Ages since Christ, been delivered in such terms, as *ever delivered-points* of Faith, whereby they have been known distinctly from disputable opinions: if this had been so, the many Controversies, whether such and such things were *de fide*, shew the maintainers of them on the one side, not capable of understanding plain words. *Secondly*, it supposeth that nothing can be received as *ever delivered*, by a following Generation, which was not delivered as ever received in a former Generation, unless they declare something not to be new, which they know is new. For why may not that which is propounded as a *probable opinion* in one Generation, be thought to be delivered as a *truth* in the next Generation, and in some following Generations (who cannot give an Historical account, how far in every Age, every Position was received) it may be owned as a point of Faith; by which means also Constitutions of expediency, may be owned as Doctrines necessary. In which case they now only hold as a matter of Faith, what the former Generation held as a truth, and so they hold no new thing differing in the substance from the former, nor design they any thing new in the Mode of holding it. *Thirdly*, This supposeth that every Generation from the time of the Apostles, have been of the opinion this Authour pretends to, to design to hold all, and nothing but what the immediately foregoing Generation held, which is a point can never be proved. For this would be indeed to assert, that never any persons studied to understand any point more clearly than it was comprized in the words they received from their Fathers; or else that when they had so studied, they never declared their conceptions, or opinions in such points; or if they did declare them, yet no number of men would ever entertain them. And this is as much as to say, that the *Church* never had any *Doctors* studied in the points of Faith; or at least, that such studies never were honoured in the *Church*, and the fruits of them received and applauded by

it; which if it would not cast a great indignity upon the *Church*, yet it is apparently contrary to the truth. *Fourthly*, It supposeth, but proves not, that all points of Faith have come down by the way of *Tradition*, and none of them failed of being delivered. For if any one of these be false, as doubtless they are, his demonstration falls with them.

10. But that we may further see the virtue of this demonstration; it may be observed, that he who will suffer himself to be perswaded by these vain reasonings, may with as much reason be a *Jew*, or a *Pagan*, as a *Papist*. The *Jewish* Doctrine held forth by their *Talmud*, as also the former Doctrines of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, were believed by that people to be *delivered ever* from *Moses*, and *Ezra*; here is an effect like this, of the *Papists* perswasion; therefore in no Age could it be changed, but was *ever delivered*, and therefore true; if the *Romish Tradition* be upon these grounds sufficiently proved *indefectible*. Amongst the *Gentiles*, the Opinions of *Jupiter*, *Juno*, *Mars*, &c. being gods, was believed to have been *ever delivered* to them from some Divine Revelation of its Original, for else they could never have believed them to have been gods. Now since it is certain the *Gentiles* received this by *Tradition* from their Fathers, and the first Generations of mankind after *Noah*, were undoubtedly instructed in the truth concerning God, of which *Noah* was a Preacher of long continuance amongst them: since according to this Discourser, no Age could deceive them in delivering what it knew false, or in delivering for certain, what it knew was not certain: Yea, since the *Tradition* of *Gentile Polytheism* was more general, than the *Popish Tradition*; that is, it was received and delivered amongst more Nations, and contradicted by fewer persons, than the *Romish Doctrines* were, and therefore if *Tradition* be demonstrated to be *indefectible* by this Argument for the *Papists*, it must be also for the *Gentiles*. Yet this belief amongst the *Gentiles* of *Polytheism*, necessarily supposed a failing of *Tradition* in this great

great point, that there is one only *God*, So far is it from proving that their *Tradition* could not fail.

I ſhall now in the cloſe of this Diſcourſe, as I promiſed *n.*8. give an inſtance of a Point, in which there is an Innovation in the preſent *Oral* and *Practical Tradition* of the *Roman Church*, which is, in denying the *Cup* in the *Euchariſt* to the *Communicants*.

The preſent *Tradition* and practice of the *Church* of *Rome* is, that the *Laity* and the *Clergy*, who do not conſecrate, do receive only in one *ſpecies*, to wit, that of Bread; and this they declare to be lawful, (and the contrary not to be neceſſary, or commanded of God) and to be ordered upon juſt cauſes, to be a true receiving the Sacrament, and to be the way whereby they may receive whole Chriſt: and they condemn, yea, and Anathematize any who ſhall ſpeak the contrary, as may be ſeen, *Concil. Conſtanc. Seſ.* 13. and *Conc. Trid. Seſ.* 5. Now both thoſe *Councils* do acknowledge, that Chriſt did inſtitute, and the *ancient Church* adminiſtred, this *Sacrament* under both kinds; and therefore by their own acknowledgement, they keep not in practice to what was delivered. But the Queſtion is, Whether their preſent practice and Doctrinal delivery oppoſeth any former delivery of Doctrine.

12. Now that I may lay a good foundatipn, and ſuch as no *Romaniſt* will reject, to know what was once the received and delivered Doctrine in the *Church* of *Rome*, I ſhall apply my ſelf not to any private Father, though approved, which poſſibly he will except againſt, as not a ſufficient teſtifier of *Tradition*: but to ſuch a conſtitution of the *Biſhop* of *Rome*, as is ſtill acknowledged, to have been an approved *Canon*, and therefore the Doctrine of the *Roman Church*, which is this of *Gelaſius* the Firſt: *We have found that ſome having received only a portion of the holy Body, do abſtain from the Cup of the conſecrated Blood, who (becauſe I know not by what ſuperſtition they are taught to be bound up) muſt without doubt, either receive the whole Sacrament, or be kept back from the whole; becauſe the diviſion of one and the ſame*

Mystery, cannot come without great Sacriledge. This is delivered for an approved Canon by all *Papists*. *Ivo* placed it in the beginning of his *Decretum*. *Gratian* inserted it, *De Consecratione Dist.* 2. *c. comperimus.* It is owned by *Bellarmine de Eucharistia, lib.* 4. *c.* 26. by *Baronius ad Ann.* 496. *n.*20. and *Binnius in Vit. Gelasii.* Nor is it denied by any that I know. And whereas the present *Tradition* asserts that it is not necessary the Laity and Clergy, not Consecrating, should receive in both kinds; this old *Tradition* saies plainly, that they who receive not both kinds, must receive neither, it being one and the same Mystery or Sacrament. And though there are some Causes now declared just and rational, to order that, the Communion shall be only in one kind, and the *Council* of *Constance* (*ubi supra*) condemn those who call this practice Sacrilegious: yet it is possible the same reasons might move some in *Gelasius* his time, to receive only in that one kind; but what ever the reason was, he declared it could never be approved, and its Principle was Superstition, and in practice there could never be a division in this one and the same Sacrament, without great Sacriledge.

13. Now though these words are very plain, yet there are two waies the *Papists* make use of, to pervert the sense of them, which I shall discover to be vain and frivolous answers, and so vindicate this testimony. The first answer is, that this *Canon* refers to the Priests not the Laity. This is the interpretation in the *Rubrick* of *Gratian*, and is mentioned as probable by *Bellarmine*. But, 1. These words of the *Canon* are generally spoken by *Gelasius*, so as to include the *Laity*, and with no colour of reason can they be restrained to the *Clergy*; and speaking of them whom he would have driven back, or kept back from the *Sacraments*, and of them who are taught; the ordinary receivers are plainly included, if not chiefly intended: and finding fault with this, that some abstained, reason will evince that all are faulted who did so abstain. 2. The restraining this to the *Clergy*, is contrary to the History and general practice of

of those times: it being certain and confessed, that even in the *Western Church*, not only till that time, but for some hundreds of years after, this Sacrament was administred to all in both kinds. In this case, to conclude, that when some were found to abstain from one kind, they must be supposed to be of the *Clergy*, would be a vain surmise. 3. This answer accordeth not with the Doctrine of those ancient times, which owned the *Laity*, to have the same right, to receive in both kinds with the *Clergy*. Thus *Chrysostome*, who was owned as Saint and Father at *Rome*. *Hom.* 18. in 2. *Ep. Corinth.* *There is*, saith he, *something wherein there is no difference betwixt the Priests and the People, to wit, as to the receiving the dreadful Mysteries, for we have all alike right to partake of them. Not as it was under the Old Testament, the Priest did eat some things, and the people other things; and it was not lawful for the people to partake of those things, of which the Priest did partake. But it is not so now. The same Body is appointed for all, and the same Cup.* So far S. *Chrysostome*. 4. Though this interpretation restraining it to the *Clergy*, contrary to Reason, History, and the Doctrine of that time, should be allowed; yet would not this be enough to reconcile it with the present *Tradition*, which delivers that the *Clergy* also, if they do not consecrate, must not receive in both kinds. 5. This first answer is acknowledged frivolous, from some of the grounds abovementioned, and rejected by many of the more learned Papists: and *Baronius*, *ad annum* 496. *n.* 20. calls it *frigidam solutionem*, a cold or dull solution; but pretends to give a better, which now follows.

14. The other Answer necessary to be examined is, That this Canon refers to the *Manichees*; and that it was only their receiving in one kind, which *Gelasius* condemns as Sacriledge, of whom it is thus written in *Leo his fourth Sermon for* Lent. *When they dare to be present at our Mysteries, to conceal their Infidelity, they so order themselves at the Communion of the Sacraments, that sometimes they receive the Body of Christ with their unworthy mouth, that they may the more*

safely,

safely be concealed; but they altogether decline to drink of the Blood of our Redemption, which we therefore certifie your holiness, that this sort of men may be known of us by these tokens; and that when their Sacrilegious dissembling is discovered, they being marked and detected, may be driven by the Priestly Authority, from the Saints society. That to these, the words of *Gelasius* refer, is the answer of *Baronius*, *ad an.* 496. *n.* 21. *Binnius* in *Vit. Gelasii*, and this also is approved by *Bellarmine.*

15. But 1. If *Leo* did discern this to be the practice of some *Manichees* fifty years before *Gelasius* his time, this is no evidence that they were such of whom *Gelasius* writes; had he intended the *Manichees*, there can no reason be imagined, why he as well as *Leo*, should not mention them; but since he expressed this in a more general way, that some were found, there is no reason to restrain this to the *Manichees.* 2. That expression that he knew not by what superstition they were bound up, cannot fitly be applied to the *Manichees.* For it was a matter not unknown, but well known, why the *Manichees* refused the Cup. Saint *Austin* about an hundred years before *Gelasius*, sets down the reason of that, *Lib.* 16. *adversus Faust. c.* 3. *They refused Wine and other things,* (he saith) *not out of any strictness to subdue the body, but as being unclean, and called them filth, and the gall of the people of darkness.* And *lib.* 20. *c.* 13. he saith, *the* Manichees *account it Sacriledge to tast Wine; they own their God in the Grape, but not in the Cup; as if the treading or pressing did offend them.* So that it was known why the *Manichees* refused Wine upon all occasions. Yea, the very word of *superstition*, suits not the *Manichees* refusal, who were acted by *gross Heresie*, and amongst other things, they hereby maintained the distinction of things *clean* and *unclean* in their own nature, whereas *superstition* rather intimates a design of reverence and veneration of the *Sacrament*, but misplaced and not well guided.

3. Nor

3. Nor can those words, *either let them receive the whole Sacrament, or be kept back from the whole*, be applicable to the *Manichees*. For if we consider the nature of *Manicheism*, how great an *Heresie* it was, that S. *Austin* in several places observes, *That they denied worship to the God of the Old Testament, they blasphemed the Prophets, they denied Christ to be born of the Virgin, they did worship the Sun, and own him to be* God, and many other gross things they held, *as the good and evil first Cause, the denial of the Resurrection, and the like:* that concerning such *Hereticks*, *Gelasius*, and the *Roman Canons* should appoint, that they might be admitted to the partaking of the whole Sacrament, no man who knows the discipline of those times can admit. For no crime was owned greater than *Heresie*, and that the *Heresie* of *Manicheism*, was in the daies of *Gelasius* greatly abhorred by the Christians, may appear, in that *after the death of* Zeno *the Emperour*, *when* Ariadne *had declared* Anastasius *the Successor*, Euphemius *the Patriarch of* Constantinople *refused to consent*, *because he was a* Manichee, *unless he should first under his hand-writing confirm the Faith of* Chalcedon, *as is related by* Theodorus, *Lector. Collect. lib.* 2. and not long after he shews how the Christians detested this *Manichean Emperour*, because an *Heretick:* which was in the very daies of this *Gelasius*. Further, when it is considered, that this *Gelasius* the first, *Causa.* 24. *Qu.* 1. *Acacius non est*, declares, *that whoever falls into any Heresie once condemned, involves himself in that same condemnation.* It is not imaginable, that he would allow the Eucharist to be given to a *Manichee*, whom he must own as a condemned *Heretick*. Nor could a *Manichee* be otherwise owned by *Gelasius*, when in his time they stood condemned, not only by the Civil Laws of *Valentinian*, *Gratian*, *Theodosius* and *Honorius*, but also by a *Roman Council* in the daies of *Pope Leo the Great*, in which, as appears from *Leo Serm.* 5. *de Jejuniis decim. mens.* they determined *that the Christians should wholly expel these accursed and contagious men from their friendship.* At which time *Leo* would not receive them who returned from *Mani-* 16.

Manichæism, until they had first condemned the *Manichees* by open profession in the Church, and by their *subscriptions*, and at length had time injoined them for their *penance*; as is observed by *Baronius ad Ann.* 444. *n.* 5. And can it then be imagined, that when *Gelasius* had found such out, he would give them liberty to be received to the *Eucharist* forthwith? especially if it be observed, that in another *Canon* of this same *Gelasius*, *Causa* 24. *Qu.* 2. *c. nec quisque*, He declares, *That they might not partake of the purity of the Lords Table with any Heretick, which Table* (saith he) *our Ancestors did always abundantly keep severed from all Heretical pollution.* Yea, further, can it be thought any way probable, that when *Leo* in the above-mentioned words, declares the *Manichees* to be in infidelity, to receive the Body of Christ with their unworthy mouth, and sacrilegiously to dissemble in taking that, and therefore to be rejected as contagious and accursed, from all society of Christians, yet *Gelasius* should judge these *infidels*, thus sacrilegiously dissembling and unworthy, yea, accursed, and condemned by former *Councils*, fit for the highest Communion of Christians, and allow them to receive the holy Eucharist. Strangely wide must they needs be, who would expound *Gelasius* by those words of *Leo*.

17. 4. If notwithstanding all this, those persons, of which *Gelasius* writes, had been *Manichees*, this would indeed have shewed the persons in *Gelasius* his time, who received only in one kind, to be in many things blameable, more than the *Papists* at this day; as dissimulation, infidelity, and the like; which were the faults by *Leo*, charged on the *Manichees*, but not by *Gelasius* charged on them he writes of: but still in that fault for which *Gelasius* condemns them he writes against, the *Papists* at this day are altogether guilty of it, that is, in dividing the *Sacrament*, or not receiving both Bread and Wine, which he saith cannot be without great Sacriledge.

18. Nor can any here make a third reply, upon any rational ground, that it then was Sacrilegious to have administred only

only in one kind, because the *known practice* and *Canons* of the *Roman Church*, required administration in both kinds: But since it hath in after times declared this practice mutable, and ordered the Communion to be given only in one kind, it is not now sacrilegious. For this answer will not agree with the intent of these words, and the Doctrine formerly received in the *Roman Church*. The reason why *Gelasius* declared it great sacriledge, to take this Sacrament in one kind alone, is intimated sufficiently in this *Canon* not to refer to the *Churches* Constitution, but the *Sacraments* Institution, in that he calls both species or kinds one and the same Mysterie: and sayes this one and the same Mysterie cannot be divided, without grand sacriledge; which is to referr us to the nature of the thing it self, and its Institution, as being not mutable. Yea further, the ancient *Tradition* of the *Roman Church* held as a Point of Doctrine, that the *Elements* in the *Eucharist* ought to be administred, according to what Christ instituted; that is, the Bread and Wine to be given to the *Laity* distinctly and separately, because *Christ* gave them so; then cannot this third Reply reconcile the present Doctrine of the *Roman Church*, with what was formerly delivered. To shew this, I could produce many testimonies; but shall only instance in *Julius* a *Roman Bishop* in a *Canonical Epistle* to the *Bishops* of *Egypt*, recorded also in *Gratian de Consecrat. Dist.2. Cum omne.* Where he declares, that *he had heard of some, who contrary to the Divine Orders and Apostolical Institutions, consecrated Milk instead of Wine, others who deliver to the people the Eucharist dipped. For it is read in the truth of the Gospel*, Jesus took Bread, and the Cup, and having blessed it, gave it to his Disciples. *But for that they gave the Eucharist dipped to the people, they have received no testimony produced out of the Gospel, in which he commends to us his body and his blood; for the commendation is rehearsed separately of the Bread, and separately of the Cup.* In which words he makes Christs Institution a Rule, by which he condemns

other practices different from it; and from this Institution he requires, that both the Bread and the Cup be separately given; and this even with reference to the Laity, or as he speaks to the people to whom it was delivered: and by this Rule he condemned the giving the Bread dipped in Wine, whereas both should be given asunder: so doth *Gelasius* by the same, condemn the receiving only in one kind, when it should be received in both. All this considered, the former *Tradition* of the *Roman Church*, may from this instance, appear to condemn the late *Tradition* as sacrilegious; and therefore I may conclude, that the same *Tradition* hath not been alwayes kept to, as may appear by preserved Monuments, out of which instances may be easily multiplied.

An Anſwer to his ninth Diſcourſe, *ſhewing, that the way of* Oral Tradition *in the Church, hath not ſo much ſtrength as other matters of Humane Authority.*

§. 1. BUt (ſaith he) *ſome may ſay all this is nature; if the Objector means, reaſon wrought upon by Motives laid by Gods ſpecial goodneſs to bring man to bliſs; I wonder what elſe is ſupernaturality. But this point is out of my road otherwiſe, than to ſhew how Chriſtian Tradition is ſtrengthened above the greateſt humane teſtimony whatever, by thoſe Motives which we rightly call aſſiſtances of the Holy Ghoſt.* Not to examine his Notion of ſupernaturality, and the aſſiſtances of the Holy Ghoſt, becauſe they concern not the Diſcourſe in hand; I ſhall only tell him what *Proteſtants* or any other men, who are true to reaſon, would ſay to this Diſcourſe; and that is, that what he hath ſaid hitherto, is of ſo low natural evidence, and ſo far from reaſon, that in this way the *Chriſtian* can have no more evidence of the truth of *Chriſtian Religion*, than an *Heathen* may have of the truth of *Paganiſm*: nor is there any ſuch certainty in *Tradition*, concerning the main Body of Chriſts Doctrine, as is comparable to many other matters of humane teſtimony. 1.

§. 2, 3. He obſerves the *Mahometans Tradition, for* Mahomets *exiſtence, will convey the truth thereof to the Worlds end if followed; and Proteſtants acknowledge, it hath had the force hitherto to be followed; And the Tradition in the Church for the main Body of Chriſts Doctrine, far exceeds that of the* Turks *for* Mahomets *exiſtence; becauſe ſuppoſing the quality* 2.

of the testifiers equal, much greater multitudes in divers Countreys, were testifiers of Christs Doctrine, being converted by powerful Miracles, than the few witnesses of Mahomets *existence: it is easier for those few* Syrians *or* Arabians, *to conspire to a lye, than for these Christians: nor can Christians be so easily mistaken concerning Christian Doctrine.* In answer to this, I in the first place grant, That there is an Historical Traditionary certainty amongst the *Turks*, concerning the existence of *Mahomet*; and it is very reasonable, that rather more should be allowed to the *Tradition* of *Christians*, than of *Mahometans*. But that it may truly appear how far *Tradition* may be relyed on, for the conveyance of truth, we must distinctly consider the matters delivered. Of which some things there are, which are not probably capable of mistake, nor liable to be perverted, and to receive a mixture of much falshood: and have this advantage, that the delivery of them from one to another, doth still continue; and no interest perswades the generality of men to deny, or indeavour the concealing of them. Now all these properties agree to the assertion of *Mahomets* existence amongst the *Turks*, to the delivery of the Being of a God among the *Gentiles*, to *Moses* being the great Prophet among the *Jews*, and to *Jesus* being the *Christ*, and I may add S *Peter*, and S. *Paul*, &c. being his Apostles among the Christians; thus the fame of a good or true Writer may be continued amongst *Historians*; and in these things and many other such like; I will grant it is not only possible, but probable that *Tradition* may convey a certainty. But there are other things lyable to mistake, whence in many matters of common fame, sufficiently known to the first Relater, by the misapprehension of them who hear the relation, the ordinary report is oft-times false; or else, 2. They are subject to be perverted, or are concealed, and not delivered; which hath been the case of many great and famous actions in the world, which are now buried in oblivion, or upon misinformation condemned; but would have been honourably esteemed, if they had been truly known.

known. And here the *Tradition* of the *Turks*, concerning the precepts of *Mahomet*, which were liable to mistake, would probably have been lost, if they had not been preserved in a written *Alcoran*. And the Traditional evidence of this very *Alcoran* containing his Doctrine, is much inferior to the *Tradition* of Christians, for the Scriptures containing the Doctrine of Christ: for even from the beginning of the reception of the *Turkish Alcoran*, their *Tradition* hath not procured it so full approbation, but that the *Persians* who profess themselves *Mahometans*, deliver another *Alcoran*, different from that of the *Turks*; which they declare to contain the true precepts of *Mahomet*: whereas Primitive Christians have as with one mouth all acknowledged, that the Scriptures of the Prophets, Apostles and Evangelists, contain the Doctrine of *Jesus Christ*, written by Divine inspiration.

Now to apply all this to the Doctrine of Christ. It is certain, 1. that many things delivered by him, are capable of misunderstanding, and not so easily intelligible as *Mahomets* existence is; which is evidenced by the many mistakes in all Ages, and disputes amongst true *Catholick* Christians as well as *Papists*, about Doctrines of Religion. 2. The Doctrine of Christ is likewise lyable to be perverted; thus as in the time of the Old Testament, the precepts of God were much corrupted by the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, who made void the Commandments of God by their *Traditions*; so under the New Testament, have many *Hereticks* grosly perverted this truth, and many extravagant *Opinionists*, have strangely blended it with their own misconceptions; whence many errors are gone forth into the world. 3. Nor can it be proved that in the way of *Oral Tradition*, considered without Scripture, all things delivered by Christ, are continued in the Church: for since in the multitude of Christs words, not written by the Apostles or Evangelists, the *Romish Church* cannot say, that her Tradition hath preserved any, how can the certainty of this Tradition be reasonably. 3.

nably imagined so great, as to secure a preservation of every Doctrine? Now let us again observe, that all these Considerations have the greater advantage against the certainty of *Tradition*, by considering with them the many successions of Generations; for matters of Faith if but once a little mistaken in one Generation, since they must with these mistakes be delivered to the next Generation, they may then be more mistaken; and so by degrees very considerable mistakes, and great corruptions may come in in points of Faith: and as to omission of delivery of some truth, if it be continued in several Generations, yet if it be not impossible, that any one Generation as to any truth, should neglect the delivery; it will in so many successions, be very probable that some one hath failed. But in the way of Scripture evidence, the words are the same which were then delivered, and the same words are no more capable of mistakes and corruptions in Doctrine, than they were at the first, nor are they less delivered to us now, than they then were. I may now infer from what is aboveſaid, that the belief of *Mahomets* existence may be continued by *Tradition*, and yet it may not preserve the whole Body of Christs Doctrine.

4. §. 4. He observes, That *humane authority or testimony is such, that none are so mad as to doubt them; but he that considers*, Joh. 3. 16. 1 Cor. 3. 9. Mat. 6. 26. *will be convinced, that the wayes of Providence to bring about mans salvation, are so much above all others, that others in comparison, scarce deserve the name of a Providence.* We own Christianity much more certain than other Histories and things: but that the preserving its certainty depends much more on Scripture than on *Tradition*, is evident partly from reason; because in a set form of written words, a change cannot be so easily made without plain discovery, as it may be where there is no such set form of words; and partly from considering matters of fact, whereby it may appear that *Hereticks* and opposers of the truth, have more corrupt-

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ed and spread corruptions of Christian Doctrine by their false delivery, than ever they could corrupt and spread any corruptions of the Scripture-writing.

§. 5, 6. We will touch of the advantages superadded to nature. *It is natural for every man to speak truth, unless some design hinder; but true Christian hearts are much more fixt to Veracity.* §. 7. *Original corruption leads men to violate Veracity, by an undue love of Creatures; but Christianity working an overpowering love of Spiritual good, leaves mans disposition to truth free.* §. 8. *The hopes and fears of Christianity as much exceed others, as eternity doth a moment, and are so held by all: yet other Motives bring down matters of fact truly; as the Reigns of Kings, Wars, Eclipses,* &c. *but that Christian Motives are more prevalent than all others, appears by considering the Martyrs and Persecutions.* In answer to this, I first observe, that what he hath here laid down as a high security to the Churches *Tradition*, makes nothing at all so much as seemingly, for the securing all, or any of its members from mistakes, and misapprehensions; nor for the preserving the weak from being deluded by others subtilty. All it seems to plead against, is, intentional deceiving, without which there may be much error. But yet even this design of deceiving, may with many in the Church much prevail, notwithstanding all indeavoured to the contrary by this Discourser. Where Christianity takes full possession in the power of it, it will ingage such men to truth, and the love of Heavenly good, and the minding of Spiritual hopes and fears: but how many are there who profess Christianity, who oft speak falshood, and are tempted to sin by undue love of Creatures, and do not guide their lives, according to the hopes and fears Religion sets before them? Therefore these things cannot assure us of preserving men from perverting truth, or neglect of delivering it, much less from ignorance and mistake. And as in other matters of History, many things are delivered amiss in the common fame, but best in the allowed Records, so it is also in Christianity. 5.

§. 9. *The*

6. §. 9. *The Ceremonies or Oaths tendered to Officers in a Commonwealth, to ingage them to be true to their Trust, have no proportion with the Sacraments of the Church, applied to Christians, that they may not prevaricate from the Faith of Christ.* These are indeed exceeding high obligations which lie upon Christians: But besides that it is no waies credible, that all Christians judged themselves hereby obliged, to deliver in the way of *Oral Tradition* all matters of Faith, directly as they received them by the same *Tradition*: I say besides this, its certain it obliges men as much to the purity of the Christian life, as to hold fast the verity of the Christian Doctrine: wherefore when it is certain that with many it doth not work its effect in the former, it may be much feared to want its effect in the latter, especially since there have been many *Hereticks.*

7. §. 10. *They who do not to others, what they would have done to themselves, this is because they are swayed by some temporal good; but this cannot be in the Church, supposing sanctity in it, because in virtue and glory, we have not the less, when others have the more, but rather we have the more also: so that here Fathers must do the greatest hurt to their Children, without the least good to themselves, if they should deceive them!* But alas! Is this Discourser such a stranger to the world, that when he hath proved, as it is easie to do, that it is highly irrational for any man to chuse any sin, he would thence conclude for certain, that there are no such sinners in the world? How evident is it, that there hath been so much want of Sanctity, that many either to please their own fancies, or to promote their own interests, have depraved the true Religion, or corrupted the Christian Doctrine? But in these cases, as in all acts of sin, men do not aim at the evil and hurt that follows, but at the seeming good and delight.

8. §. 11. *Christian Doctrine hath the advantage of the greatest universality, wisdom and goodness of the recommenders.* §. 12. *Nature will teach all a care of their off spring, but Christianity more, and chiefly in matters of endless misery and happiness.*

§. 13. *Con-*

§. 13. *Consider credit; he who will lie perniciously and to friends, how ill is this esteemed? Chiefly if this be against the highest Motives, and with the greatest confidence and Oaths. This is of all other cases most disgraceful, in matters which concern Christs Doctrine, chiefly if in a Pastor against his particular Oath, to preach Christs Doctrine truly. Nor can the world of Fore-Fathers all conspire to this villany.* Yet it is certain, notwithstanding the recommendations of the Christian Doctrine, it may be both mistaken and depraved. Nor doth love of off-spring take place actually against all setting examples of sin, nor against ignorance and mistakes; nor in *Jews* and *Hereticks*, did it take place against corrupting worship. Nor have all men been so tender of their credit. Many *Hereticks* have been self-condemned. There were who said of Christ, *let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours. Simon* knew and was Baptized into the Christian Doctrine, and yet thoughts of credit did not keep him from perverting it. Yea, men gain credit at least with a party, by their erring explications, if they be plausible, and take with the multitude; and then alone can they become *Traditions*. However, some there are who value not esteem either with men or with God, who *knowing the judgement of God, that they which do such things are worthy of death, not only do them, but take pleasure in them that do them.* And if by such weak considerations as these above mentioned (though the truth of the contrary is generally known in the world) this Authour would conclude, that Pastors can never deliver amiss; and therefore whatever any Histories say to the contrary, there never were erroneous *Bishops* in the *Eastern* or *Western Churches*, or any places whatever; I doubt he would be put to wonderful puzzles to reconcile the present Doctrines in all *Churches*. Yet if *Protestants* may not as men of reason judge that Pastors have erred, because all Histories and the present differences in Religion manifest it: they will still as Christians believe that S. *Peters* Spirit was more infallible than this Discoursers, who hath assured us,

2 Pet. 2. 1, 2. *That there shall be false Teachers, who privily shall bring in damnable Heresies,* and many shall follow their pernicious wayes.

9. §. 14. He concludeth with a flourish, That *every virtue and Science, would contribute to Traditions certainty, which would require,* he saith, *a large Volume to shew.* But that we may judge what this large Volume would be, he gives us a taste wherein is nothing else but empty and frothy words. *Arithmetick lends her numbring and multiplying faculty to scan the vast number of* testifiers; Geometry *her proportion to shew the infinite strength of certainty in* Tradition, *&c.* But if such words as these were considerable, this Discourser may receive a return more truly. *Arithmetick* cannot number and determine the many possible, and probable wayes of erring in *Tradition*; *Geometrical proportions* cannot discover how manifold and great defects appear, in the receiving the Body of Christs Doctrine by *Tradition*, more than in the acknowledgement of *Mahomets* existence; nor how great a proportion of men there are in the Church, who have delivered their own opinions and speculations, to one who only testifieth what he received; *Logick* will discover the Sophistry in the pretended Arguments for *Tradition*; *Nature* will evidence the great possibility of mans mistake or neglect in the way of *Tradition*; *Morality* will shew the great corruption of man, whereby he is lyable every where to err and miscarry; *Historical prudence* will shew the failing of *Tradition* both in *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and many Christian Nations, overspread with known and confessed errors, and will thence conclude, that it is possible for any Nation or particular Church by *Oral Tradition*, to neglect the faithful preserving truth; *Political Principles* will evidence according to the practice of all Civil Policies, that writing is a more exact way to convey down Laws and Rules of Order, than *Tradition* is; *Metaphysicks* with its speculations, will evidence the very notion of *Oral Tradition* of the whole Body of Christs Doctrine to this

this Age, to be an aiery vanity; *Divinity* will discover much of the great wisdom and goodness of God in giving us the Scriptures, rather than in leaving us to the uncertain and dangerous way of *Tradition*; *Controversie* will evidence the uncertainty of almost every thing in Faith, if it had no other Basis than mere *Oral Tradition*, without any written support. So that after all the survey of his several Discourses, where nothing is solidly spoken for *Tradition*, I may well conclude, that this way of *Tradition* is *defectible*.

ANSWER TO HIS COROLLARIES.

AFter these several Discourses, he deduceth forty one *Corollaries* built upon them; all which must needs fall with the ruine of their foundation. Yet that they may not pass without due Censure, I shall briefly deduce other opposite Corollaries, and for the most part directly contrary to them, from our Discourse.

Corol. 1. They may of right pretend to Faith, who hold not to *Tradition*, since they have a sufficient Rule of Scripture, and Motives enough to believe (*Disc.* 2. 3, 4.) But they have no *sure-footing* in the Faith, who depend only on this *Oral Tradition*; since it is both a fallible and actually a false guide (*Disc.* 5. 6, 8.).

Cor. 2. They may pretend to be a *Church*, and a true *Church*, who own not *Oral Tradition*: because they may be a number of Faithful, (*Cor.* 1.) but whoever followeth any way of such *Tradition*, cannot manifest themselves to be a *Church*, unless by recourse to some other Rule or way of evidence, *Disc.* 5. because they may in this way err from the Faith, and so not be faithful.

Cor. 3. They may be members of a *Church*, who are not followers of *Tradition*; because by ordinary and sure means they may have Faith.

Cor. 4.

Cor. 4. They who renounce *Tradition* for their guide, and cloſe with Scripture, are not cut off from the Faith thereby; becauſe they imbrace hereby the moſt ſure *Rule of Faith.*

Cor. 5. The followers of ſuch Anceſtors, who ſo renounced *Tradition*, have the ſame ſecurity, that they may have Faith, by relying on the Scripture as a Rule.

Cor. 6. The followers of them who renounce *Oral Tradition*, may rightly claim to be a part of *Chriſtian Tradition*, or deliverers of the Faith: becauſe they receive the Scripture Doctrine in written Records, and ſo deliver it to others, *Diſc.* 2. —— So did the Apoſtles deliver Doctrines to the *Jews* from the Old Teſtament.

Cor. 7. They who pretend to reform what is delivered as matters of Faith, in any Church guided by *Oral Tradition*, may hold the true Chriſtian Faith, becauſe ſuch Churches may err in the Faith, as did the *Jewiſh.* But then ſuch *Reformers* muſt come to what appears by Records to be the Faith at firſt delivered.

Cor. 8. The followers of this way of *Tradition*, cannot evidence who are truly faithful, and of the Church; becauſe their *Tradition* is no ſure Rule (*Diſc.* 5. 6, 8.) And if any ſhould hold the Faith intire after ſucceſſions of *Tradition*, this is by chance, and not demonſtrative in the way of *Tradition.*

Cor. 9. The diſowners of *Tradition* who hold to Scripture, can give certain account who are to be held as truly faithful; becauſe they have a ſure Rule to try this by, which is the Scripture.

Cor. 10. Such who hold not this *Tradition*, can rationally puniſh them who revolt from their Faith: becauſe they can by Scripture-Rule ſufficiently evidence the certainty of their Faith, and the guilt of ſuch *revolters.* *Diſc.* 7.

Cor. 11. That company of men hang together like the Body of a Chriſtian Church, who cloſe with the Scripture,

pture, and adhere not to *Tradition*: because they hold Christs Doctrine, delivered to them by the Apostles and Evangelists Writings, whence the *Roman Church* is highly *Schismatical*, for disowning all others, and accounting it self the *Universal Church*.

Cor. 12. *Tradition* may be argued against out of the letter of Scripture: because while *Oral Tradition* is uncertain, Scripture is preserved certain, by the delivery of *Records*, which is a more sure and excellent way of delivery of Christs Doctrine.

Cor. 13. The Authority of some Churches may in reason be opposed against *Tradition*; *viz.* The Authority of the Ancient Church, against the present *Oral Tradition*: because since *Tradition* is *defectible*, the Doctrine of the *Ancient Church*, might both differ from the present Church, and is most like to be in the truth. What he pretends of *Tradition* being *Antecedent to the Church, and including the living voice of the whole Church essential*, concerning present *Tradition* is a vain surmise; for how can the present *Tradition*, of which we dispute, be antecedent to the Church sixteen hundred Years since established? and since it is defectible *(Disc.* 6. 8.*)* how can it include the voice of that Church?

Cor. 14. *Fathers* or *Councils*, may rationally be alledged, against present *Tradition*; for if they be Fathers or Councils, now owned as *Catholick* by the holders of *Tradition*, they will shew the inconsistency of *Tradition* with it self. If they have formerly been owned as *Catholick*, they will shew the change of Doctrine in the way of *Tradition*.

Cor. 15. Disowners of *Tradition* in right of reason must be allowed to argue against *Tradition* out of *Scriptures*, *Fathers* and *Councils*: for this is no matter of courtesie, nor any argument only *ad hominem*, but *ad rem*, since they have a certainty of these things from *Traditional Records*, *Disc.* 2, 3, 4. How little the testimony of *Tertullian* is to his purpose; see in the next Discourse,

course, in inquiry into *Tertullians* opinion of the *Rule of Faith.*

Cor. 16. The Authority of History, or Testimonial Writing, may be alledged against *Tradition:* because matters of fact past, and the former state of things, may run contrary to present Tradition: And the credibility of the Historian may be evident by his impartial writings, agreement with other Writers, by the testimony of other faithful Writers, or the present Tradition concerning him; or if in *Church-History*, by his having been formerly received as a Catholick Writer.

Cor. 17. Other *Tradition* may in right of reason be alledged against *Romish Oral Tradition:* for though the sure Christian *Tradition*, be the most firm of any; yet since the Traditional Records of Ancient Churches, *Disc.* 5. *n.* 20. and the delivery of truth in Scripture, *Disc.* 5. *n.* 18. are much surer than *Oral Tradition*, and the different delivery in other Churches, may be as sure as in the *Roman*, they may be alledged against it.

Cor. 18. Arguments from Reason may be urged against *Oral Tradition*; for since this Tradition is weak and fallible, it may be disproved by reasons which are strong and solid.

Cor. 19. Instances may be argued from against *Traditions* certainty: for since *Tradition* is defectible, instances may have that Historical certainty which *Tradition* hath not; and may in the allowance of the Author, be delivered by *Tradition*, and so shew its inconsistency.

Cor. 20. The denying *Oral Tradition* doth not dispose to Fanatickness; because Protestants deny it not by recourse to a *Light within*, but to a Rule without, and rational evidence.

Cor. 21. *Fanatick* Principles may be confuted without the help of *Romish Oral Tradition*, but not by it in a rational way, for such confutation is by evidence of the certainty of the contrary. Now we can evidence the certainty of Scripture, and its being contrary to *Fanaticknes*, *Disc.* 2. but they cannot evidence the certainty of *Tradition*.

Cor. 22.

Cor. 22. We may argue against *Tradition*, without questioning the constancy of any species in nature, or of mans nature. Because it is not founded upon mans nature; but upon a supposal of his actions free from possible *ignorance, mistake, corruption, forgetfulness, speculations and working fancies about notions received.* For by any of these, which ordinarily attend man, may *Traditions* certainty be destroyed.

Cor. 23. There is great possibility of various rational waies of arguing against *Oral Tradition:* by Scripture, Councils, Fathers, History, Reason, Instances, *&c.*

Cor. 24. *Oral* and *practical Tradition*, is no first Principle by way of Authority for matters of fact; but *Scripture-Tradition*, or other sure Traditional Records, is such a Principle: because Scripture and such Records are certain, *Disc.* 4. and *Tradition* is not.

Cor. 25. Nor is this *Tradition* self evident in matter of fact long since past; because it is fallible and defectible.

Cor. 26. The certainty of *Tradition* being disproved, that Church which relies on it, cannot thereby be certain, that it holds Christs Doctrine, because this Tradition may err in this Doctrine.

Cor. 27. *Traditions* certainty being disproved, *general* or *Provincial Councils*, or Societies, cannot be infallible by proceeding upon it; because it may both mislead and be mistaken.

Cor. 28. The *Roman See* with its head, cannot be infallible by Traditional certainty; because *Tradition* is fallible. Nor hath the *Church* of *Rome* any particular advantages, to render it hereby more infallible than any other. When he here saies, That *the joint indeavours, Preaching, Miracles and Martyrdom of the two chief Apostles at* Rome, *were more vigorous causes to imprint Christs Doctrine, than were found any where else:* He sure forgat *Jerusalem*, where were the joint indeavours, Preaching and Miracles of *Christ Jesus* himself, and all his Apostles; the Passion of

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Jesus, and Martyrdom of other chief Apostles, and Prophets; and yet in that Church, were professed by the *Bishops*, both *Arianism*, and *Pelagianism*; and therefore *Rome* cannot be proved free from false Doctrine, by such Arguments. Nor will its constant visible profession make more for *Romish Oral Tradition*, than for *Jewish* or *Gentile* Tradition.

Cor. 29. If this *Tradition* were established, and put in practice according to this Discourlers mind; the *Romish Church* could not be secure, that they have any Copy of Scripture truly significative of Christs sense. *Because if*, as this Author here talks, *They should correct Scriptures Letter, by the sense of mens hearts*, it would be wonderfully depraved, because in this sense *Tradition* may and doth err. But we know *Sixtus* and *Clemens* went not this way in correcting the *vulgar Latin*; And themselves declare, that ancient Copies and Writings were their Rule for correction. And by these means, *Protestants* have a Copy preserved significative of Christs sense, by the several deliveries of Scripture Copies, in several Ages and Churches.

Cor. 30. *Tradition* disproved, Scripture can no waies be infallibly interpreted, by this *Oral Tradition*, because it is fallible and false: But *Protestants* in all things necessary can infallibly understand the sense of Scripture, since such things are delivered in clear and plain words.

Cor. 31. *Tradition* being disproved, the Church which relies on it, may receive as *held ever*, what was not so *held ever*.

Cor. 32. Whence also errors opposing Faith may be received by the followers of *Tradition* as Faith; because they may err in the Faith.

Cor. 33. Notwithstanding *Tradition*, Erroneous opinions may generally, and with publick Authority spread themselves in the Church; because this defectible *Tradition* may deliver errors, by the viciousness of some, and the liableness to error in others.

Cor. 34. By the same reason may errors gain *sure footing* and abide in the Church, in the way of *Tradition*; because as many Opinators who deliver their conceptions of truth, may both mistake themselves, and be mistaken by others, for testifiers of the sense of the former Generation; and as many corrupters of truth may be mistaken by others for deliverers of truth, as was the case in the prevalency of the *Arian* and other spreading *Heresies:* so may the determination of a confirmed *Council*, where error hath taken place, give it *sure footing* among them who stand ingaged to own that Council which is the case of *Papists*.

Cor. 35. The ignorance or corruption of the Church-governours and the better part being overpowered, may hinder many corrupt opinions, from being ever declared against the way of *Oral Tradition*; and cause many true opinions to be so declared against, that without rejecting the way of such *Oral Tradition*, they can never be received. Because *Tradition* when once it errs, can never return without denying it self.

Cor. 36. By the same reason, Erroneous Opinions may constantly abide in the Traditionary Church. What he here saith, *That following evil practices, will necessarily shew them opposite to Faith*, is his erroneous opinion; because practices though bad, if grounded on opinions held for truth, are judged lawful by such holders; nor can they be convinced of such practices being evil, till first they be perswaded that such opinions were evil. Such was the case of the *Gentiles* gross *Idolatry*, the Pharisaical breaking Gods Commands, as in *Corban*, &c. and *Papists* worshipping Images, and Saints, *&c.*

Cor. 37. Erroneous opinions and practices, may fully prevail in the judgements and practices of the most faithful, who follow the way of *Oral Tradition*. Because since their Rule may fail them, they may do their best to follow this, and yet may their judgements and practices both miscarry.

Cor. 38.

Cor. 38. Erroneous opinions may be charged upon that Church, which follows *Oral Tradition*, becauſe they may follow from that Churches Rule neceſſarily; ſince *Tradition* is a falſe guide; and they may be generally owned by that Church, in its publick profeſſion, and the determination of its Councils.

Cor. 39. Therefore it is no weakneſs to object againſt ſuch a Church, ſuch opinions and practices.

Cor. 40. *Oral Tradition* can be no firſt principle in Controverſial Divinity: for ſince it could be no otherwiſe a principle, than by declaring what God ſaid, and it may err and fail in that; it is therefore no principle in Divinity.

Cor. 41. If as this Author here reaſonably concludeth, Chriſts promiſe to his Church, can bear no part in the *Rule of Faith*; nor be any firſt Principle to manifeſt the certainty of the Churches *Tradition*; then have great and many followers of the *Romiſh Tradition*, hitherto erred, in that this promiſe hath been held and delivered by them for ſuch a Principle.

An Inquiry after, and Examination of, the consent of Authority to the foregoing Discourse.

AT last this *Discourser* proceeds to Authorities and testimonies, both of Scripture, Councils, and Fathers; which is an inquiry of very great use in this matter. For since *Protestants* own *Scripture* as an unerrable guide, if it pronounce *Tradition* to be the *Rule of Faith*, then will we acknowledge it to be such: and its reasonable to expect from *Papists* who own the *Scripture* to contain Divine truth, and with the *Council* of *Trent* own no *Tradition* with greater reverence, than the Scriptures, that if Scriptures declare themselves to be the *Rule of Faith*, then this may be generally received. Concerning *Councils* and *Fathers*, if these could be generally produced from the Apostles times, *Protestants* will grant, That what is so declared to be the *Rule of Faith*, is certainly such. But if only some *Councils* and *Fathers*, in some after Ages be produced, if such plead for *Tradition*, *Protestants* own it not a demonstration; because they know they might be in some error. Yet concerning the known *Councils* and *Fathers* of the *Ancient Church*, we are so confident, that they were not mistaken concerning the *Rule of Faith*, that we will acknowledge that to be the true *Rule of Faith*, which was by them declared to be such. But if generally the Doctrine of the *Ancients* be on our side, then *Oral Tradition* will further evidently appear to be no *Rule of Faith*; yea, not only to be fallible, but false and self-inconsistent, if that which is now delivered concerning it, be contradicted by the consent of the *Ancient Church*.

SECT.

SECT. I.

An Inquiry what is declared the Rule of Faith *by the Scriptures.*

HE first goeth about to prove by Scripture, *That the* Rule of Faith, *is self-evident, from* Isai. 35. 8. *This shall be to you a direct way,* so *that fools cannot err in it.* Which words as cited by this *Author*, shew only the knowledge of God under the Gospel, to be so clear and evident, that they who will seek after him and live to him, though of low capacities, may understand so much as is requisite for their right walking; which *Protestants* assert also, and own this evidence to be in Scripture. 1.

But that *Tradition* may be proved this *Rule of Faith* by Scripture, he alledgeth *Isai.* 59. 21. *This is my Covenant with them, saith the Lord, my Spirit which is in thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart from thy mouth, and from the mouth of thy seed, and from the mouth of thy seeds seed, from henceforth for ever.* 2.

But, 1. to have Gods Word and Spirit in their mouth, proves their delivery not a *Rule of Faith*, or unerring: then must the speeches of every private Christian who shall be saved, be a *Rule of Faith*; because the Scriptures assure us, *That every one who shall be saved, hath both the Spirit of Christ and his word in their mouth,* see *Rom.* 8. 9. *Rom.* 10. 9, 10. *Mat.* 10. 32. 2. Though all who are born of God shall have his word in their mouth, this will not secure us, that what is by any Society of men declared as truth upon *Tradition*, is Gods Word; no more than what the Psalmist saies, *Psal.* 37. 30. *The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgement*] would assure, that the Doctrines owned by the way of *Tradition* among the *Jews*, were alwaies the true Doctrines: since it might well be,

be, that those *Jews* were not such righteous men, as it may also be that the generality of some *visible Church* are not Gods seed. 3. Gods Word may be in the mouth, where the holy Scriptures are the Rule. We read, *Josh.* 1. 8. *This Book of the Law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night.* Where it is evident, that when *Joshua* was to keep the Law in his mouth, he had the Book of the Law for his Rule, and had his acquaintance with the Law by meditating in it. God saith *Mal.* 2. 6. (concerning *Levi*) *The Law of truth was in his mouth*, and Vers. 7. *they shall seek the Law at his mouth*; and when they did thus in *Ezra*'s time, he read the Law out of the Book of *Moses*, and that Book did *Hilkiah* send to *Josiah*. While S. *Paul* professed his Faith with his mouth, he declared, that he *believed all things written in the Law and the Prophets* When we read *Deut.* 31. 21, 22. *This Song shall not be forgotten out of the mouths of their Seed*, vers. 22. *Moses therefore wrote this Song the same day, and taught it the Children of Israel.* Is it not evident, that it was from the writing of *Moses*, that this Song was in their mouth? and that writing by which they were taught, surely was their Rule to know this Song by.

3. Next to this he urgeth as pithy and home, but not to his purpose, *Jer.* 31. 33. *I will give my Law in their bowels, and in their hearts will I write it*; and notes, *that S.* Paul *contradistinguisheth the Law of Grace, from* Moses's *Law, in that the latter was written in Tables of Stone, and the former in fleshly tables of mens hearts.* But, 1. What proof is here of *Tradition* being the *Rule of Faith?* Had the Scripture said that under the Gospel, Christians should receive the Law of God no otherwise, than from one anothers hearts, it might have seemed to serve his purpose. S. *Austin de Spiritu & litera, c.* 21. having mentioned the place fore-cited of *Jeremy*, and that of S. *Paul* to which this *Discourser* refers, inquires *what are the Laws of God written by God himself in their hearts, but the very presence of the holy Spirit, who is the finger of God, by whom being present, Charity which is the fulness of the*

the Law, and the end of the Commandment is poured forth in our hearts? Now if God cauſeth his commands to be inwardly imbraced by a Spirit of love and piety, this is far from conveying to them a Spirit of *infallibility*. 2. Nor doth S. *Paul* contradiſtinguiſh the Law of *Moſes*, and the Goſpel in thoſe words, but he contradiſtinguiſheth the way of Gods inward writing in the heart, from the way of his outward writing in thoſe tables. For even the Law of *Moſes* was alſo written in the hearts of them who feared God, as the Laws of *Chriſt* were more eminently in the hearts of Chriſtians. Hence ſuch expreſſions as theſe, *Pſal.* 119. 11. *Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not ſin againſt thee.* Pſal. 37. 31. *The Law of his God is in his heart, none of his ſteps ſhall ſlide.* Yea, *Moſes* tells the *Jews*, Deut. 30. 11. *This Commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far of,* v. 14. *but the word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou maiſt do it.* Yet though Gods Law before the coming of Chriſt was in the hearts of his people, yet was the Book of the Law then their Rule, as now is the Old and New Teſtament. 3. If that place of S. *Paul* be conſidered, 2 *Cor.* 3. 3. it will evidence that what the *Holy Ghoſt* going along with his Miniſtry, had written in the fleſhly tables of their hearts, was enough to commend his Apoſtleſhip, which is the ſcope and deſign of that place; but it no ways ſignifies that theſe *Corinthians* even at this time, were not capable of erring in any Doctrine of the Faith, for he declares to them in this ſame Epiſtle, *chap.* 11. 3. that he fears *leſt as Satan beguiled Eve, ſo their minds ſhould be corrupted from the ſimplicity that is in Chriſt.* 4. And if we could have been aſſured (as we cannot) that the delivery of truth in the Church of *Corinth*, was a *Rule of Faith*, this would plead much for the *Tradition* of the *Greek Church*, rather than of the *Roman*, which agreeth not with it, and ſo would deſtroy *Romiſh Tradi-*

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4. But as this Discourſers citations of Scripture Authority are very impertinent, I ſhall in brief obſerve, whether the Scripture do not evidently declare it ſelf to be the *Rule of Faith.* To the which purpoſe, beſides many other places, obſerved in the foregoing part of this anſwer, let theſe be conſidered, S. *Luke* 1. 4, 5. *It ſeemed good to me alſo, having had perfect underſtanding of all things from the very firſt, to write unto thee in order, moſt excellent Theophilus, that thou maiſt know the certainty of thoſe things, wherein thou haſt been inſtructed.* Now that is a *Rule of Faith,* which is the beſt way to aſcertain us of Faith; and from theſe words it is evident, that even in the times of the *Apoſtles* and *Evangeliſts,* the common delivery by word of mouth, which *Theophilus* had heard of, concerning matter of Chriſtian Religion, was not ſo certain as the Evangelical writing; and therefore this Goſpel was written, that *Theophilus* might know the certainty of thoſe things. S. *John* would not have written his Goſpel to this end, *that we might believe that Jeſus is the Chriſt the Son of God,* Joh. 20. 31. if he did not think this writing ſhould direct and rule our Faith. S. *Paul* would not have told his *Philippians,* Phil. 3. 1. *To write the ſame things for you is ſafe,* unleſs notwithſtanding the force of delivery by word of mouth, they ſtood in need of this advantage of the Apoſtles writing for their ſafety and eſtabliſhment; nor yet would this be ſafe for them, unleſs this writing was ſufficient to effect this eſtabliſhment, which could not be, unleſs it was a *Rule of Faith.*

5. Yea that the writing of Scripture was the way, by which the ſpirit of God intended to preſerve the Doctrine of Faith in after times, when the Apoſtles were deceaſed, S. *Peter* declares, 2 *Pet.* 1. 12. *I will not be negligent to put you alwaies in remembrance of theſe things, though you know them,* v. 15. *I will indeavour that you may be able after my deceaſe, to have theſe things alwaies in remembrance.* And ὑπομιμήσκειν which the Apoſtle uſeth, ſignifies to make a ſhort compriſal of things, for the help of memory. Now if this was the deſign of S. *Peters* Epiſtle, it will neceſſarily follow

low, that the preserving Christian Doctrine in memory, is best secured by the Written Word of God, otherwise possibly they could not have been able to have these things in remembrance. And lest, if this Apostle had said no more of this subject, any might have objected, that he endeavoured they might be able to have these things in remembrance by Tradition, he himself directly shews, that this is the advantage of his writing, and the end of both his Epistles, 2 Pet. 3. 1. *This second Epistle, beloved, I write unto you, in both which, I stir up your pure minds, by way of remembrance.* So that notwithstanding the force of delivery by word of mouth, he thought writing necessary to keep these things in their remembrance. And *Jesus* himself said to the *Jews*, *If you believe not Moses writings, how shall you believe my words?* John 5. 47.

SECT. II.

What the Synod of Lateran, *owned for the* Rule of Faith.

NExt his search after Scriptures, this Author pretends to give the Judgement of some few *Councils*, which he asserts to own *Oral Tradition* for the Rule of their Faith. I might here mind him, that others of his Church have delivered, that *Councils* owned Scripture as their Rule. *Nicol. de Cusa*, a *Cardinal* of the *Roman Church*, *lib.* 2. *de Concordant. Cath. c.* 6. sayes, *That the manner of the General Councils, was to have the holy Gospels placed in the middle, where they were assembled.* And a little after he adds, *Matters of Faith were first treated of.* ——— *The Synod decreed according to the testimonies of the Scriptures.* 1. +

2. But to examine his Testimonies. The first is from the *Synod* of *Lateran*, which was no ancient *Synod*, being above six hundred and forty years after Christ. They say, *We all confirm unanimously and consonantly (consonanter* not *consequently) with one heart and mouth, the Tenets and Sayings of the holy Fathers, adding nothing to those things which were delivered by them; and we believe so as the Fathers have believed, we preach so as they have taught.* These words are delivered indeed by that *Synod*, but if that *Synod* be enquired into, this will make little for *Oral Tradition.*

3. This *Synod* of *Lateran* was held under *Pope Martin*, against the *Monothelites*; in which were read the Testimonies of several Fathers, S. *Ambrose*, *Austin*, *Basil*, *Cyrill*, *Hippolytus*, *Epiphanius*, *Chrysostom*, *Justine*, *Athanasius*, *Hilary*, *Nyssen*, *Nazianzen*, *Leo* and others, with reference to whose words, the *Synod* added, *We all confirm*, &c. Where it is observable, they proceeded upon the written Testimonies read out of the Fathers, to determine what was the Doctrine of the Fathers; and this is no way of *Oral Tradition*, nor any thing rejected, but highly approved by *Protestants.* Yea, here the *Bishop* of *Rome* and his *Roman Council*, own that as Catholick Doctrine, which was delivered in the Writings of the Fathers, and eminent Writers in other Churches, which is not this Discoursers way. And it is further observable, that these sayings of the Fathers no way appear to be the Rule of their Faith, but are owned by them as Truths, unto which they all agree: whence these words *Dogmata patrum omnes firmamus, we all confirm their Doctrines*, cannot signifie, that they make these their Rule; but that they consent with them in the things alledged, and confirm their saying to be truth. And this *Protestants* will do, as well as the *Synod* of *Lateran.*

4. But that we may enquire what appears to have been the Rule of this *Synod*, it is observable, that none of the Fathers Testimonies here cited against the *Monothelites*, who denyed *two wills* in Christ, refer to any *Oral Tradition*, but very many to several grounds of Scripture. For instance,

stance, *Leo Bishop of Rome* is by *Pope Martin* produced in the opening that *Synod*, that Christ said, *According to the form of God, I and my Father are one; but according to the form of a servant, I came not to do my own will, but his who sent me*; where he plainly manifests two wills. Again, from *Leo*, *He who was incarnate for us by his uncreated will, and operation of his Divinity, of his will wrought Miracles, whence he testifies, saying, As the Father raiseth the dead, and quickens them, so the Son quickneth whom he will: by his created will and operation, he who is God above nature, as man, willingly underwent hunger, thirst, reproach, sorrow and fear, and this again the Evangelist testifies, saying, he went into an house, and would have none know, but could not lye hid: and again, They went through* Galilee, *and he would not that any should know; And again, he would go into* Galilee; *also they gave him Wine mingled with Gall, and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink* So S. *Austin, Ambrose, Cyril, &c.* in their testimonies read in this Council, to prove the humane will of Christ, urge farther, *If it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt: My soul is sorrowful to death: Now is my soul troubled.* And *Deus-dedit* Bishop of *Sardinia*, declared in this *Council*, that the testimony of *Cyrill* of urging those Texts, *was for the perfect refuting those Hereticks.* S. *Austin* is likewise produced thus glossing concerning Christs Humane Nature, *If we say he was not sorry, when the Gospel saith, My soul is exceeding sorrowful; if we say he did not eat, when the Gospel saith he did eat; the worm of rottenness creepeth in, and there will be nothing left sound, then his body was not real, nor his flesh real; but what ever was written of him, brethren, is accomplished, and is true*: So far S. *Austin* there cited and approved. So that we see they grounded all along upon the Scriptures, and the necessary consequence of his having two wills, from his having two Natures. And when in this Council was read the Type of *Paul* Bishop of *Constantinople*, wherein he prohibited all disputes, about Christ's having or not having two wills, the *Council liked his intention*

tion to have all contention cease; but declared their dislike of his dealing alike with the truth and the error; yet they determined, that if he could have, and had shewed by the approbation of Scripture, that both were equally subject to reproof or praise, his Type had been well. All this considered, there is no more in the words cited by this *Discourser*, to prove they made *Oral Tradition* their Rule, than when the Church of *England* declares her consent with any *Confessions* of others, or any *Doctrines* of the Fathers, and shall say, We agree to all there spoken; it could be thence concluded, that the Church of *England* hath *Oral Tradition* for her *Rule of Faith.*

SECT. III.

Of the Council of Sardica, *and what it owned as the* Rule of Faith.

NExt he produceth the Council of *Sardica*, which is the only Council by him produced, within the first six hundred years after Christ. Out of the *Synodical Epistle* of that *Council*, sent to all *Bishops*, he citeth these words, *We have received this Doctrine, we have been taught so, we hold this Catholick Tradition, Faith and Confession.* Let us consider the place cited more largely. This *Council* declared, that the *Hereticks* contended, *that there were different and separate Hypostases* (by which word that Council tells us, those Hereticks meant Substances) *of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. But we have received and been taught this, and have this Catholick Tradition, Faith and Confession, that there is one Hypostasis or Substance of the Father,*

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Son and Holy Ghost. But 1. How did these Fathers receive this? They presently add, *That the Father cannot be named or be without the Son, is the testimony of the Son himself, saying, I am in the Father, and the Father in me*; and again, *I and my Father are one.* 2. This *Council* of *Sardica* was held not long after the *first Council* of *Nice*, and received this faith from it; and in this Council of *Sardica*, the *Catholick Bishops* did establish the determination of faith, in the *Council* of *Nice*, *Socr. lib.* 2. *c.* 20. And after the end of this *Council*, *Hosius* and *Protogenes*, the leading men in the *Council*, wrote to *Julius Bishop* of *Rome*, testifying, that all things in the *Council* of *Nice*, were to be accounted *ratified by them, which they explained as they saw need. Sozom.* 3. 11. Wherefore that which was the *Rule of Faith*, in that first and famous *Council* of *Nice*, is likewise owned to be the sufficient Rule by the *Council* of *Sardica*, especially if this was any way declared by that *Nicene Council*: in the same manner, as if now any *English Convocation*, should by publick writing declare their establishing and receiving the Doctrine of the *Thirty Nine Articles*, it must needs be concluded, that they own that to be the *Rule of Faith*, which is there declared to be such. Concerning the *first Council* of *Nice*, I shall discourse after enquiry into the *second Nicene Council*, which he next applyes himself to in his Discourse.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

What was owned as the Rule of Faith, *by the second Council of* Nice.

1. THe last Council he produceth, is the *second Council of Nice*; whose Authority if it was indeed on his side, yet would it no way tend to determine this Controversie; and he cannot but know, that *Protestants* have no great esteem for that *Council*, having these several things rationally to object against it. 1. That it was a *Council* above eight hundred years after Christ, not only celebrated in that time, when the purity of Primitive Doctrine was much declined; but even the matters therein declared concerning the worship of *Images*, were innovations, and not agreeable to the more ancient Church. 2. That this *Council* cannot in reason be pretended, to declare the general *Tradition* of the Church Catholick; when it is certain, that immediately before it, a *Council* of 330 Bishops at *Constantinople*, defined the contrary; and the like was presently after it done by a *German* Council. 3. They delivered that as the sense of the Church *Catholick*, which was not such, nor will the present *Roman* Church acknowledge it to be such, in Act 5. of that *Council*, when the Book of *John* of *Thessalonica* was read, wherein it was asserted, That the sense of the *Catholick Church was, that Angels and Souls of men, were not wholly incorporeal, but had Bodies, and therefore were* imitabiles picturâ, as *Binius* hath it, *representable by Pictures*; *Tharasius* and the *Synod* approved of it. Yet here *Carranza* in his Collection of the Councils, adds a Note, that this is not yet determined by the Church; and observes, that many of the Fathers asserted the *Angels* to be wholly incorporeal, whom the first *Synod* of *Lateran* seems to follow. *Pamelius* puts it among the *Paradoxes* of *Tertul-*

Tertullian, (*Parad.* 7.) which S. *Austin* condemned, to assert the *Souls* of men to have any *effigies* and *colour*: and both *Pamelius* upon *Tertul.* and *Baron. ad an.* 173. *n.* 31. derive the original of this Opinion from the *Montanists*. 4. It is evidenceable by many instances, that they satisfied themselves with very weak proof, both from Scriptures, and from the Fathers, as hath been by several *Protestant* Writers shewed.

Yet as bad as this *Council* was, which was bad enough; I assert, That it was not of this *Discourser*s judgment, that *Oral Tradition* is the *Rule of Faith*. In order to the evidencing of which, I shall first examine his citations.

His first citation is out of *Act.* 2. *We imbued with the precepts of the Fathers, have so confessed, and do confess.* 2. Which words I suppose he took out of *Carranza*, where they are curtly delivered: for sure had he read them, as they are at large in the *Council*, he would never have been so mistaken, as to have applied them to *Oral Tradition*. The words more at large, are thus spoken by *Tharasius*, *Patriarch* of *Constantinople*, and approved by the *Synod*. *Adrian Primate* of *old Rome*, *seems to me to have written clearly and truly, both to our Emperours, and to us, and hath declared the ancient Tradition of the Church to be right. Wherefore we also searching by the Scriptures, by inquiring, arguing, and demonstrating, and also being imbued with the precepts of the Fathers, have so confessed, and do confess, and will confess, and do confirm the force of the Letters read.* So that whatever is here spoken concerning a *Rule of Faith*, must be this; that that which upon inquiry may be made appear by Arguments and Demonstrations, to be the Doctrine of the Scripture, and accords with the ancient Fathers, is delivered to us by the *Rule of Faith*. And is this the Doctrine delivered by this *Discourser*, or by *Protestants*?

Yet further, these words of *Tharasius*, confirming the Letters of *Adrian* then read; we may observe how those Letters also as they were recorded by that *Council*, agree with the Protestant Doctrine. Now *Adrian* in that Epi- 3.

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stle to *Constantine*, and *Irene*, which *Tharasias* refers to, exhorts them to acquiesce in the *Tradition of the Orthodox Faith*, *in the Church of Blessed* Peter *and* Paul, *the chief of the Apostles, and to imbrace it, as it hath been done by other Emperours, honouring their Vicar with all their heart. For, these chief of the Apostles, who did begin the Catholick Orthodox Faith, did command their Faith to be preserved by writing, as by Laws enacted, even to all them who should succeed them in their Seats*, and so (*saith he*) our Church doth keep it. Yea, as to the Question in hand then about Images, *Adrian* there urgeth Arguments from Scripture, with such expressions as this, *As the holy Scripture hath it, so let us have it*: and after his arguments from Scripture adds, *wherefore it is not to be doubted*; and then indeavours to shew the consent of Fathers. Whence it is evident, *Adrian* urged the Emperors to close with the delivery of the *Church* of *Rome*, because then that Church did keep to the written Laws of the Apostles, and by this means preserved their Faith: and Scripture he follows, to put things out of doubt; this was then, as appears, the Doctrine of the Church of *Rome*; and if that be it which will please this Discourser, let him take it, and follow it.

4. In *Act.* 3. of this *Council*, this Discourser cites these words, *We receive and venerate the Apostolical Traditions of the Church.* But is this enough for this Authors purpose? 1. Is every thing that is received and venerated, made a *Rule of Faith*? 2. Must these *Apostolical Traditions* needs be *Oral Tradition*? Or did the Apostles deliver nothing in Writing? These words are in an Epistle of *Theodore* of *Jerusalem*, to that *Council*, which was by it approved: but in that Epistle, as throughout this *Council* they pretended up the Scriptures and Doctrine of the Fathers, cited from their Writings, to ascertain them of the Doctrine of the Apostles, as to the then disputed point concerning Images. Yea, that we may know what in that Epistle was meant by Apostolical Tradition, it is more plain in the end of that Epistle in these words; *Whereas therefore it is sufficiently*

ciently plain, that the Scripture receiveth them, wherefore it is lawful. Whence, though this *Council* was erroneous in the decision of the Controversie then in the World, for ought hath been yet produced, it doth not appear to have been in the same error with this *Discourser*, concerning the *Rule of Faith.*

His next testimony from this Council is, *Act.* 7. 5.
where the Council have these words; *We walking in the Kings High-way, and insisting upon the Doctrine of our holy and Divine Fathers, and observing the Tradition of the Catholick Church, in which the holy Spirit dwells, do define.* But what if the *Doctrine* of the *Fathers*, and *Tradition* of the *Church* meant by them, was not *Oral*, but *written* ? As for the Fathers testimonies its plain, they were not received by *Oral Tradition*, but were such as were found in their Writings, and were thence cited both in the Letter of *Adrian* in the second action of that *Council*, and in the testimonies produced, *Act.* 4. As for *Tradition* it is observable, that in the definition of this *Council*, in which are the forecited words, they declare, that they receive the Churches *Traditions*, *whether in Custome or in Writing*; *but then they declare things so received by them to agree to the Gospel*; and all such customs of the Church if truly such, will *Protestants* as heartily receive as this *Council.* These things they might observe, though they did not make them a *Rule of Faith.* And that the *Tradition* they relied on as the ground of their Faith, was chiefly the holy Scriptures, may appear probably, because in the beginning of the fourth *Action*, where they produce the grounds of their *Tradition*, they first urge several Scriptures, *Exod.* 25. *Numb.* 7. *Ezek.* 41. *Heb.* 9. and others; and after them the Fathers Writings: but it appears more certainly in the *seventh Action*, where is their *Synodical Epistle to* Constantine, *and* Irene, in which they urge many Scriptures, to prove the truth of what this *Council* defined, and then say, *These* (to wit Scriptures) *being so confessedly, and without all doubt, we believe, these things to be acceptable and pleasing to God.* Whence it ap-

pears, that the Rule by which they did without all doubting believe, was the holy Scriptures; and what else is a *Rule of Faith?* So that they principally relied on the Scriptures, and in consent with them, on the written Doctrine of the ancient Fathers, and the customs of the Catholick Church. And this is that *Protestants* will not disclaim, but allow as a Rule, though they will keep better to it, than this seventh General Council (as it is called) did.

6. Lastly, From the *first Action* of this Council, he cites these words, which were spoken by *Basilius* of *Ancyra*, as part of a recantation of his former opinions, and seem to be allowed by that Council: *They who contemn the Writings of the holy Fathers, and the Tradition of the Catholick Church, and bring for their excuse, and inculcate the words of* Arius, Nestorius, Eutyches, *and* Dioscorus; saying, *unless we were sufficiently instructed out of the Old and New Testament, we would follow the Doctrines of the Fathers, and of the six holy Synods, and the Traditions of the Catholick Church, let him be accursed.* And so will *Protestants* say, They who contemn the preaching of the holy Fathers, and the *Tradition* of the Catholick Church against *Arius*, and those other *Hereticks*, (which *preaching* and *Tradition* did declare it self grounded, and was truly grounded upon Scripture; imbracing and venting the words of these *Hereticks*, which we know were against Scripture, though these persons pretend Scripture to be on their side, which we know is not;) let him be accursed. Nor from these words will it follow, as he would have it, that it was ever the pretence of most execrable *Hereticks*, to decline *Tradition*, and pretend sufficient light from Scripture; the contrary to this, hath been by me shewed, and will be further manifested. These words do not speak it the constant practice of *Heretioks* to pretend to Scripture; but only speak of some certain *Hereticks*, whose time is defined to be betwixt the *sixth* and *seventh General Councils*: for if they had not lived after the *sixth Council*, they could not have declared, why they did

did not follow the *six General Councils*; and if they had not lived before the *seventh General Council*, their words could not have been there produced. But such words as these of those *Hereticks*, which decline the true *Tradition* of the Church founded in Scripture, and satisfie themselves with empty pretences of Scripture, Protestants will condemn. Yet lest the gloss upon these words should not seem a sufficient answer; without further proof of what is there intimated, I shall undertake to evidence, that the *Doctrine* of the *Fathers*, and *Tradition* of the *ancient Church* against those *Hereticks*, was such as was grounded upon Scripture, as their *Rule of Faith*; and that those *Hereticks* assertions were therefore rejected, because they were contrary to these Scriptures: Which I shall do in examining what were the grounds of Faith, upon which the Catholick Fathers proceeded, at the time of the *four first General Councils*; in which were these *Hereticks* condemned, as also *Macedonius* in the *second Council*.

SECT. V.

What were the grounds of the Catholick Faith *asserted against* Arianism, *in and at the time of the first* Nicene *Council?*

1. ARius being a *Presbyter of Alexandria*, was for his Heretical Doctrine denying the eternal Godhead of the Son, opposed and rejected by *Alexander*, Bishop of that place, and deposed from his Office by an *Alexandrian Council*, *Socr. Hist. Eccl. lib.* 1. *c.* 6. upon which *Alexander* writes an Epistle to all his fellow Ministers, wherein as he lays down many Scriptures, which he declares to be full against the assertion of *Arius*; so he there declares, that the *Arians when they had once determined to fight against Christ, would not hear the words of our Lord.* And he there likewise shews, that whereas he had oftentimes overthrown them *in unfolding the Divine Scriptures, they as* Chamælions *changed themselves.*

2. The same *Alexander* of *Alexandria*, in his Epistle to *Alexander* of *Constantinople*, declares, that the *Arians* assertion did tend to destroy the *holy Scriptures, and that in the Scriptures they pretended to urge, they did offer violence to the holy Scriptures.* He likewise there urgeth the Scriptures against them, with such expressions as these, *John is sufficient to instruct*, Paul *doth declare manifestly.* But to leave this particular Bishop, and come to the General Council.

3. When this famous *Council* of *Nice* was gathered together, *Constantine* tells them, *Theodor. Hist. Eccl. lib.* 1. *c.* 7. *that they had the Doctrine of the holy Spirit in writing: for* (saith he) *the Evangelical and Apostolical Books, and the Oracles of the ancient Prophets, do evidently instruct us, what we ought to think of Divine things; wherefore rejecting all contentious*

tious strife, let us receive a solution of such things as are questioned, from the Divinely inspired speeches.

4. As this *Council* of *Nice* was put forth by *Pisanus*, out of the *Vatican Exemplar*, it is observable, that they oft urge the same Scriptures which *Alexander* did urge against *Arius*: and in the third Book of that Council, The Bishops said by *Eusebius*, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. That* [was] *rejects* [was not] *and* [God] *takes away* [that he was not God]: *believe the things that are written, neither think nor inquire after things that are not written.* So that *Council.*

5. After the decision of this Council, *Socr. lib.* 1. *c.* 5. shews, that *Eusebius* writing of the *Nicene* Confession, saies, *The form of Execration which is set after the Creed, we thought fit to be received, because it prohibits the using of words not written, from whence almost all the confusion and disorder of the Churches do arise. Wherefore when no Scripture of Divine inspiration, useth these words* [*concerning the Son*] *that he was of things that were not, and that it was once when he was not, it is no way fit to speak or teach such things.*

6. That this *Council* made Scripture their Rule of decision, will yet further appear from the *words of Constantine*, in his Epistle to the Church of *Alexandria*, recorded, *Socr. lib.* 1. *c.* 6. where he declared, That the Council had diligently examined all things; and writing of the *Arians*, he adds, *some blasphemed, speaking and professing to believe things contrary to the Divinely inspired Scriptures and the Faith.* And Athanasius *ad Epictetum* speaks, *how powerful the Faith of* Nice *might be expected to be against Heresies, which was professed according to the holy Scriptures.* I shall hereafter observe somewhat more out of *Athanasius*, which will further declare, that at the time of this *Nicene Council* (of which he was a Member) Scripture was the Rule made use of against the *Arians.*

SECT.

SECT. VI.

What was received as the Rule of Faith, *at the time of the second General Council at* Constantinople?

1. THis *Council* not being called against *Arius*, *Nestorius*, *Dioscorus*, or *Eutyches*, which are mentioned by this *Discourser*; but against *Macedonius*, who denied the *Divinity of the holy Spirit*, and other *Hereticks*; I shall but briefly observe, That *Evagrius*, *Hist. Eccl. lib.* 2. *c.* 4. declares, *the design of that Council to be to make manifest by Scripture-testimonies what they conceived about the Holy Ghost, against them who adventured to reject his Lordship.* And if the testimony of *Evagrius* being a private Historian, be not sufficient, this very same thing was before him attested and declared, concerning this *second General Council*, in the definition of the *General Council* of *Chalcedon*, *Act.* 5.

2. And in the seventh Canon of this second Council, where they declare how they will receive those that return from Heresie, amongst other things concerning some of them are those words: *We receive them as* Greeks, *and the first day we make them Christians, and the second Catechumens,* —— and so we Catechize them, and make them continue a *long time in the Church, and hear the holy Scriptures, and then we Baptize them.* Doth it not hence appear, that this Council owned the Scriptures as the way to the true Faith, and establishment in it, in that they would not receive Hereticks until they had been long hearers of it?

3. But I will not here neglect to mention, that at the time of this Council, *Pope Damasus* gathers a *Council* at *Rome*, hearing of that at *Constantinople*, where they declare, *That after all the Prophetical, Apostolical and Evangelical Scriptures, by which the Catholick Church by the grace of God is founded; the Church of* Rome *is by some Synodical Decrees, above other Churches;*

Churches; *And Christ himself said, Thou art Peter.* Is not this testimony to be seen in their own *Collectors* of the *Councils*, plain enough to shew what was in those daies owned by the Church of *Rome*, as the main ground and foundation of Faith?

SECT. VII.

What was owned as the Rule of Faith, *at the time of the third General Council at* Ephesus?

THis *Council* was gathered against *Nestorius*, when *Cœlestine* was *Bishop* of *Rome*, whose place was here supplied by *Cyril* of *Alexandria*. That the *Nestorians* then did not pretend to Scripture for their Rule, is probable in that *Socr. lib. 7. c. 32.* relates that they indeavoured to falsifie the Copies of the Scriptures; as likewise in that an Epistle of the *Nestorians* to the people of *Constantinople*, begins thus: *The Law is not delivered in writing, but is placed in the minds of the Pastors*; which Epistle is extant in the Acts of the *Ephesine Council*, *Tom. 3. c. 7.* And in the Epistle of *Cyril* to *Comanus*, and *Pontamion*, *Act. Conc. Eph. Tom. 2. c. 18.* *Cyril* relates, that when the *Metropolitans and Bishops had disputed with* Nestorius, *and had clearly shewed out of the Divine Scripture, that he was God, whom the Virgin bare according to the flesh, and therefore evidently concluded him to err: he was full of anger, and exclaimed in his manner wretchedly against the truth.* So that it seems the *Metropolitans* and *Bishops*, who opposed *Nestorius*, made Scripture their Rule, as the *Protestants* do; but the *Nestorians* then were not for these written words as their Rule, but for what is written in mens hearts, in which the *Nestorian assertion* may claim some kindred with our *Discourser*. 1.

To observe further what *Rule of Faith* was made use of against *Nestorius*, we may understand it from the writings of *Cyril* of *Alexandria*, who as he was the chief opposer of 2.

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Nestorius; so was he highly approved of by this Council of *Ephesus*, for his appearing against *Nestorius*, and also by *Cœlestine Bishop of Rome*, as appears in his Letters directed to him, *Tom.*1.*Conc.Eph.c.*16. *Cyril* concerning the right Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, to the *Empresses*, *Eudocia* and *Pulcheria*, shews, *that his Book may be of use to reduce some from error, and by various Arguments, and demonstrations of the Divine Scriptures, to strengthen them in the Faith, who are nourished in the Doctrine of truth:* & in that whole Book propounds Doctrines from the several Books of the New Testament, against the Doctrine of *Nestorius*. And I suppose it will be granted, that that which in such a case of Heresie arising, would stablish in the Faith, and reduce to the Faith, must be established upon, and have evidence from the *Rule of Faith*. In another Treatise of his to the same *Empresses*, of the same subject, he tells them, *The Scriptures are the Fountains which God spake of by his Prophet* Isaiah, saying, *Draw the waters out of the wells of salvation. Wholesom Fountains we call the Prophets, Apostles, and Evangelists:* and a little after, The speeches of the Holy Fathers, and their Sanctions *wisely stir us up, that we should observe diligently what is most agreeing to the holy Scriptures, and should with a quick sense contemplate the truth, hidden in the Divine letters.*

3. The same *Cyril* in an Epistle to the Clergy and people of *Constantinople*, declared his expectation, that *Nestorius would have returned from his perverse opinions, and would with reverence imbrace the Faith delivered by the holy Apostles, and Evangelical Writers, as also by the whole holy Scripture, and sealed, that it might receive no damage by the voices and oracles of the holy Prophets.* Is not this to make Scripture a *Rule of Faith*.

4. I might add much more from *Cyril*; and what shall be spoken concerning *Cœlestine*, who wrote to the *Ephesine* Council, and approved it, will further shew the *Rule of Faith*, at that time owned by the *Roman Church*. Therefore I shall here only subjoin one testimony of the whole Council of *Ephesus*, in their *Epistle* to *Cœlestine Bishop* of *Rome*,

Rome, *Tom.* 4. *Conc. Eph. c.* 17. wherein they related, *That the Letter of* Cyril *to* Nestorius *had been read in the Council, which the holy Synod did approve by its judgement, because it was in the whole agreeable to the Divine Scriptures and the Exposition of Faith, which the holy Fathers put forth, in the great Synod of* Nice. We here meet with their being guided by Scripture, and the former decisions founded upon it, but the Rule of *Oral Tradition*, or any other unwritten Rule, was to this Age a perfect stranger.

SECT. VIII.

What was owned as the Rule of Faith, *at the time of the fourth General Council at* Chalcedon?

HAving sufficiently evidenced the *Rule of Faith*, at the time of the *first General Council* against *Arius*, who denied the Eternal Divinity of the Son of God; and of the second against *Macedonius*, who denied the Lordship of the holy Spirit; and of the third against *Nestorius*, who divided Christ into two Persons: I now shall briefly inquire what was owned as this Rule, at the time of the *fourth General Council* against *Eutyches*, who denied that Christ had two natures; wherein *Dioscorus* was also condemned. Now *Eutyches* was opposed by many Catholick Bishops, and more especially was opposed and condemned by *Pope Leo*. But the Rule by which these Bishops, as well as this *General Council* did condemn him, was the holy Scriptures. *Flavianus* Bishop of *Constantinople*, in an Epistle of his extant amongst *Leo*'s *Epistles*, *Ep.* 6. saies, *There were some who knew not the Divine readings, dispraise the Fathers, and desert the holy Scripture to their own perdition; such an one* (saith he) *was* Eutyches *amongst us.* Amongst the Epistles of

Leo, Ep. 53. is extant an Epistle of *Eusebius* Bishop of *Millain*, and the *Council* assembled with him, wherein that *Synod* declares their assent to the Faith, contained in *Leo*'s Epistle sent to the *East, because the brightness of light and splendor of truth did shine in it, by the assertions of the Prophets, Evangelical Authorities, and the testimonies of Apostolical Doctrine.*

2. *Leo*, himself (by whose means the Council of *Chalcedon* was called, in which the errors of *Eutyches* were more fully censured) in his tenth Epistle writing of the *Eutychians*, sayes, *That they fall into this folly, because when they are hindred by any obscurity in attaining the knowledge of the truth, they have not recourse to the Prophetical voices, the Apostolical Letters, and Evangelical Authorities, but to themselves.* And a little after of *Eutyches*, he speaketh thus, *That he knew not what he ought to think of the incarnation of the word of God; nor was he willing to gain the light of understanding, to labour in the holy Scriptures.* And in the same Epistle cites, and urges many Scriptures against *Eutyches*, with such expressions as these, *He might have subjected himself to the Evangelical Doctrine, in* Matthew *speaking; He might have desired instruction from the Apostolical Preaching, reading in the Epistle to the* Romans, ch. 1. *He might have brought holy diligence to the Prophetical pages, and have found the promise of God to* Abraham, *&c.* with other Scriptures in the like manner produced. These testimonies of *Leo*, evidence, that he owned the holy Scriptures to be the best way to come to Faith, and be stablished in it, and is not this to be a *Rule of Faith?* Yea, he further observes, that the neglect of them were the cause of swerving from the Faith.

3. To come to the *Council* of *Chalcedon* it self. In its *second Action*, this tenth Epistle of *Leo* was read, and they declared, *they all believed according to that Epistle.* At the same time was read the Epistle of *Cyril* to *Nestorius*, which as it was read in, and approved by the third General Council, *Conc. Eph. Tom.* 2. *ch.* 3. So being in *Chalcedon* read, they declared, *They all believed as* Cyril *did*; in which Epistle

stle he shews, *that we must not divide Christ into two Sons, nor make an union of Persons; for the Scripture* saith, *The Word was made Flesh: which is nothing else but he did partake of our flesh and blood, and made our Body his, and became Man of a Woman.* Wherein he plainly enough makes use of the holy Scriptures to decide the Controversie concerning that point of Faith, or rather, to confirm that matter of Faith against its opposers.

SECT. IX.

Of the Rule of Faith, *acknowledged by the Fathers, and first of* Cœlestine.

AS it was easie to shew the general consent of the ancient Fathers, to the Protestant Doctrine in this particular; I shall now indeavour to do it in all those our *Discourser* pretends to be on his side; and to avoid over great prolixity, I will confine my self to them only. His first citation is from *Cœlestine*, in his Epistle to the *Ephesine Council*; where his words somewhat mis-cited by the *Discourser*, are to this purpose: *We must by all means indeavour, that we may retain the Doctrines of Faith delivered to us, and hitherto preserved by the Apostolical Doctrine.* But what is here for *Oral Tradition?* Doth *Cœlestine* tell us that that was the way of delivering and preserving truth till his time? No such matter; yea, in the beginning of this *Epistle* he saith, *That is certain which is delivered in the Evangelical Letters.* But that we may better understand *Cœlestine*, whose Letter to the *Council* of *Ephesus*, was written against *Nestorius*; consider first his Letter to *Cyril*, who confuted *Nestorius*; in which are these words: *This truly is the great triumph of our Faith, that thou hast so strongly proved our asserti-*

ons, and so mightily vanquished those that are contrary, by the testimony of Divine Scriptures. Yea in his Epistle to *Nestorius*, he calls that Heresie of *Nestorius* a *perfidious novelty, which indeavours to pull asunder those things which the holy Scripture conjoins.* And in another *Epistle* to the Clergy and people of *Constantinople*, he hath these words of *Nestorius: He fights against the Apostles, and explodes the Prophets, and despiseth the words of Christ himself, speaking of himself: of what Religion, or of what Law doth he profess himself a Bishop, who doth so foully abuse both the Old and the New Testament.* And in the end of that *Epistle*, thus directs those *Constantinopolitans*; *You having the Apostolical words before your eyes, be perfect in the same sense, and the same meaning.* These words of *Cœlestine* seem plainly to shew, that in the *Romish Church*, Scripture was then the way whereby to try Doctrines. But if this be not the sense of these words of this *Roman Bishop*, which seem so plain; I may well conclude, that the words by which the *Roman Church of old* delivered truth, were not generally intelligible, and so their *Tradition* must be uncertain.

SECT. X.

What was the Rule of Faith, *owned by* Irenæus?

1. THe next Father he cites is *Irenæus*, from whom he cites three testimonies. From *Irenæus lib. 3. c. 4.* (though the naming the Book was omitted by him) he would prove that the Apostles gave charge to the Bishops to observe *Tradition*, and that it is a sufficient *Rule of Faith*, without Scripture: in which he abuseth *Irenæus*. From *Irenæus lib. 1. c. 3.* he to the same end cites this as his testimony, *Though there be divers tongues in the world, yet the vertue of Tradition*

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on is one and the ſame, the preaching of the Church is true and firm, in which one and the ſame way of ſalvation is ſhown over the whole world. Of which words, only the firſt clauſe is in the place cited in *Irenæus*; but theſe words, *The preaching of the Church is true and firm*, &c. though gloſſed upon by this *Diſcourſer* as conſiderable, are not to be there found in *Irenæus*; and if they were, they would not ſerve his purpoſe, as may by and by appear. And from *Irenæus*, *lib.* 3. *c.* 3. (though he miſ-cites it, *lib.* 1. *c.* 3.) he cites words, *p.* 138. to prove that the Doctrine of the preſent *Church* is the Doctrine of the Apoſtles.

Now that I may give a true account of the meaning of the words cited, and alſo of the judgment of *Irenæus*; I ſhall firſt obſerve from *Irenæus* himſelf, what kind of Hereticks thoſe in the Primitive times were, who occaſioned theſe words, and how he confutes them, and next which was his own judgement of the *Rule of Faith.* Concerning the former, *Irenæus lib.* 3. *c.* 2. tells us, *That thoſe Hereticks, when they were convinced out of the Scriptures, were turned into the accuſing of the Scriptures themſelves, that they were not right, nor of authority; that they were variouſly ſpoken, and that the truth could not be found out of them, by thoſe who have not Tradition: and that the truth was given in a living voice, which was the wiſdom in a Myſtery, which every one of theſe Hereticks pleaded themſelves had in* Valentinus, *or* Marcion, Cerinthus *or* Baſilides. *And when they were challenged to hold to the Tradition of the Apoſtles, and their Succeſſors in the Church; they ſaid they were wiſer than the Apoſtles, and ſo would neither hold to Scripture nor Tradition: ſince they are ſlippery as Serpents, indeavouring every way to evade* (he ſaith) *they muſt be every way reſiſted.* 2.

After this *c.* 3. he contends with them concerning *Tradition*, and ſhews, that the *Churches Tradition* is much more conſiderable than theſe *Hereticks*; and hath the words which our Diſcourſer cites, *p.* 138. *All they who will hear truth may diſcern in the Church, the* Tradition *of the Apoſtles manifeſt in the whole world*; after which he adds, 3.

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We can mention the Bishops which were by the Apostles instituted in the Churches, and were their Successors; and if they had known any Mysteries to teach them, who are perfect, they would not have concealed them from them. Further to manifest what was this *Tradition*, he refers to *Clemens* his Epistle, saying, *from thence they who will, may know the Apostolical Tradition of the Church, That there is one* God, &c. Then *that* Polycarp *who conversed with the Apostles*, whom *Irenæus* had seen, *was a more faithful testifier than* Valentinus, *or* Marcion; *and he declared the same Doctrine, and from his Epistle to the* Philippians, *they who will, may learn the preaching of truth; and that* John *who lived to the time of* Trajan, *was a true witness of the Apostles Tradition.*

4. Cap. 4. He observes, *That the Church are the depository of truth, and if any have any dispute of any question, ought they not to have recourse to the ancient Churches in which the Apostles conversed, and from them to receive what is certain concerning the present question.* And then he adds, which our *Discourser* also cites, *p.* 131. *But what if the Apostles had not left us the Scriptures, ought we not to follow the order of Tradition, which they delivered to those to whom they committed the Churches? To which Ordination, assent many Nations of those Barbarians, who believe in Christ, having salvation written in their hearts by the Spirit, without Paper and Ink, and diligently keeping the ancient Tradition, believing in one* God, &c. And after saith, *They who believe this Faith without letters, are Barbarians as to our speech.* Cap. 5. He saith, *Tradition being thus in the Church, let us come to that proof which is from Scripture*; and so spends several Chapters in shewing the Doctrine of Christ and the Apostles out of Scriptures.

5. From what hath been observed, it is evident, 1. That the Hereticks *Irenæus* dealt with, were in some thing of the Spirit of this *Discourser*, that is, only for their own *Tradition*, and would neither be tryed by Scriptures, nor any other *Tradition*, but what was amongst themselves: as our *Discourser* will disown tryal by Scriptures, and by what was delivered in the *Fathers Writings* or *Councils*, *Cor.* 14.

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and from all other Churches but the *Roman Church*, *Cor.* 13, 17. 2. That the reason why he so much insisted upon *Tradition*, was because these Hereticks, as they denied Scripture, so they pretended to the best *Tradition*: which way of his arguing speaks not *Tradition* the *Rule of Faith*, but of considerable use in this case; even as if we should dispute with a Pagan, who owns not Christian Revelation, concerning the truth of Christian Religion; the using rational Arguments against him, will shew that we count them very useful in this case, but will not conclude that we own reason and not revelation, for a *Rule of Faith*: so if a Christian shall urge the Doctrine of the Old Testament, as sufficient and certain against the *Jew*, it would be a vain consequence to inferr, that he makes this only, and not the New Testament-Revelation, the Rule of his Christian Faith. 3. That *Irenæus* did not think the urging the present *Tradition* of the Church, sufficient against those Hereticks, but thought it necessary to have recourse to the ancient Churches Tradition; and this Doctrine of the ancient Church, he evidenceth sufficiently from the writings, as also from the verbal testimonies, of them who were famous in the ancient Church: and Protestants are as ready as any to appeal to the ancient Church, and had we such a man as *Polycarp*, who conversed with S. *John*, we would receive his testimony as far as *Irenæus* did. But having only ancient Writings, which *Irenæus* thought sufficient, in the case of *Tradition*, we readily appeal to them. 4. That when *Irenæus* saies the Apostles *Tradition* is manifest in the whole World, *lib.* 3. *c.* 3. or *lib.* 1. *c.* 3. though there be divers tongues in the World, yet the vertue of *Tradition* is one and the same. That is the Church in the whole World believes and delivers the same Faith: He speaks this against those Hereticks, about those great Articles of Faith. That *there is one God*, and *one Jesus Christ*, &c. as himself expresseth, *lib.* 1. *c.* 2. and *lib.* 3. *c.* 3. for even in the time of *Irenæus*, there was not in all the World an agreement in all Doctrines; since *Victor* Bishop of *Rome*, and *Irenæus* did not

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agree in this, whether it was Lawful to Excommunicate the *Asian Churches* for their different observation of *Easter*, *Eus. Hist. Eccl. lib.* 5. *c.* 6. Now is this any consequence, That Doctrine which teacheth *one God*, &c. against those Hereticks, was generally continued in the Church till *Irenæus* his time; which was not two hundred years after Christ; therefore all Doctrine must certainly be preserved without corruption in the Churches Delivery above sixteen hundred Years after Christ? though we certainly know that besides Protestants, other Churches do not now deliver the same things. 5. When he said, *Ought we not to have followed* Tradition, *if the Apostles had not left us the Scriptures?* He saith not, *we ought to do so now they have left them*; but rather in these words intimates the contrary.

6. But now more directly to see his opinion of the *Rule of Faith*, consider these words of his, *lib.* 3. *c.* 1. *The Gospel they then preached, they after delivered to us by the Will of God in the Scriptures, to be the foundation and pillar of our Faith.* And then shewing how the Evangelists have delivered to us by Writing, saith, *If any man assent not to them, he despiseth even Christ the Lord and the Father, and is condemned of himself, and resisteth his own salvation.* Lib. 2. c. 46. *Wherefore since the holy Scriptures, both Prophetical and Evangelical, clearly and without ambiguity, and as they may of all be heard, declare,* &c. *they appear very dull who blind their eyes at such a clear discovery, and will not see the light of preaching.* C. 41. *Having therefore the truth it self for our Rule, and the testimony of God being openly manifest, we ought not to reject the firm and clear knowledge of God. If we cannot find the solution of all things in Scripture, we must believe God in these things, knowing that the Scriptures are perfect, being spoken by the word of God, and his Spirit.* Lib. 4. c. 66. *Read more diligently the Gospel, which is given us by the Apostles, and read more diligently the Prophets, and you shall find every action, and every Doctrine, and every passion of our Lord, set forth in them* Lib. 3. c. 11. *The Gospel is the pillar and firmament of the Church, and the Spirit of life: wherefore it is consequent, that*

that it hath four pillars——he hath given us a fourfold Gospel, which is contained in one Spirit. If then according to *Irenæus*, men may believe by the Scripture, and that is the pillar and foundation of Faith, and they that seek, may find all Doctrine in it, which is there clear and manifest, is not this enough to shew, he makes it a *Rule of Faith?* If not, we have observed him calling it by the name of a Rule also, and declaring, that none but the Barbarous Nations did then receive the Faith in an unwritten way.

SECT. XI.

What was owned by Origen *as the* Rule of Faith?

AND first in his Books περὶ ἀρχῶν, where in the beginning of his Procem, having observed, that some *who profess themselves to believe in Christ, differ in so great things, as concerning God, our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost:* by which words he manifestly refers to such Hereticks, as *Irenæus* before him treated of. Such were *Montanists, Valentinians, Marcionists, &c.* he begins to lay a Rule he will proceed by, in the words referred to by this Author, *Let the Ecclesiastical Preaching delivered from the Apostles, by order of succession, and remaining in the Church to this time be preserved: that only truth is to be believed, which in nothing differs from the Ecclesiastical Tradition.* This is his Rule he will proceed by in these Books, by which in opposition to those Hereticks, he means the Churches delivery of truth, which was chiefly contained in the Scriptures; as I shall evidence, first because he useth promiscuously the phrases of Ecclesiastical Preaching and Scripture frequently in this 1.

Procem, and excepts against the Book called *The Doctrine of Peter*, as being no part of it; and in the end of the same Procem declares, that therefore *he who would treat of these things, to know what is truth in every one of them, must effect it, by taking such assertions as he findeth in the Holy Scriptures, or such as are consequent from them.* Where in the end of the same Procem, he declares in other words, the Rule laid down not many Periods before in the beginning of it; which is quite opposite to the design of *Oral Tradition.* I shall yet further confirm this by two other passages out of those Books περὶ ἀρχῶν: The one *lib.* 1. *c.* 3. where when he had declared, that *some of the* Greeks *and* Barbarians *owned the Son of God*, he adds, *We according to the faith of his Doctrine, which we have for certain divinely inspired, do believe, that it is no other wayes possible, to expound the more eminent and more divine account of the Son of God, and to bring this to the knowledge of men, but only by that Scripture which was inspired by the Holy Ghost; that is, by the Evangelical and Apostolical, as also that of the Law and the Prophets.* Now it is not conceivable, that he who believed, that without the Scriptures there could be no eminent Christian knowledge of Christ, should lay any other *Rule of Faith*, or exclude Scripture, from being that Rule. The other passage is *lib.* 4. *c.* 1. *It is not enough*, he sayes, *for them who discourse of such and so great things, to commit the matter to humane senses, and the common understanding; but we must take for the proof of the things we speak, the testimonies also of the Divine Scriptures; which testimonies, that they may afford us certain and undoubted faith, either in such things as are to be spoken by us, or in those that are already spoken, it seems necessary to show that they are the Divine Scriptures inspired by the Spirit of God:* which he there undertakes to prove. What can be spoken more fully to make Scripture both the only Rule, and a certain and undoubted *Rule of Faith*? And if yet nothing will satisfie but the word *Rule*, we shall find that also toward the end of his fourth Book immediately before his *Anacephalæosis*; where

where he saith, *our understanding is to be kept to the Rule of the Divine Letters.*

Though enough hath been already observed to shew the great mistake of this Citation from *Origen*, I shall yet farther take notice, that the phrases which deceived this Author, *Ecclesiastica Traditio & Ecclesiastica Pradicatio*, do both of them amongst the Fathers oft signifie the delivery in the Church by the holy Scriptures. But to avoid multiplying instances, concerning Ecclesiastical Tradition, I shall refer to what shall be spoken concerning *Clemens Alexandrinus*, whose Scholar *Origen* was, and to what is hereafter cited from *Athanasius* against *Samosatenus*, concerning the phrase of Ecclesiastical preaching; we may observe a like phrase in *Austin de Unitate Ecclesiæ*, c. 16. *Let them shew their Church if they can, in the prescript of the Law, in the predictions of the Prophets, in the Songs of the Psalms, in the words of the Pastor himself, in the preachings and labours of the Evangelists; that is, in all the Canonical Authorities of the holy Books.* Somewhat alike expression is above cited from *Irenæus*, *lib.* 2. *c.* 46. and from *Leo Ep.* 10. in *Sect.* 8. *n.* 2. 2.

His other testimony from *Origen* is at the end of his 29 *Hom.* in *Matt.* *We ought not to believe otherwise than as the Churches of God have delivered us by Succession.* Which words he there speaks to the same purpose with the former, to assert the way of the Churches *Tradition*, and that Scriptural against the Hereticks. To understand *Origen* herein it is not amiss to observe, a little before these words he expounds, *the abomination of desolation, to be a word which stands in the place of the holy Scriptures, and perswades to depart from the Creator, who is the only and true God, and to believe another God we know not whom, above him to whom none is like.* In which words, he evidently refers to the ancient Hereticks; and in the beginning of his 30. *Hom.* names *Basilides*, *Marcion*, *Valentinus* and *Apelles*, to whom he referred; every one of which as the Church-History informs us, brought in another God from the true. Concerning 3.

these Heresies, *Hom.* 29. at the end he exhorts, *that though they should pretend some Scriptures, they should not believe them, but keep to the Churches Tradition.* Why they are not to be believed in pretending to some places of Scripture, he sheweth, *Because the light of truth doth not appear from any place of Scripture, but from all Scripture, that is of the Law, Prophets, Evangelists, and Apostles.* That the Churches *Tradition* he recommends, is that only which is grounded upon, and according to Scripture is evident, in that a little before he saies; *The abomination of desolation, doth alwaies superadd something to what is in the Scriptures:* and the *shortning those daies*, he expounds, *that the good God will cut off all those additaments to Scripture by whom he pleaseth.*

4. *Origen* here all along agrees with the Protestants Rule, but no way with *Oral Tradition*, nor with any thing else that differs from Scripture, or adds to it, but he accounts all such, as the *abomination of desolation.* It were easie to observe many other testimonies from *Origen*, which I omit, as supposing I have from these two places chosen by this Authour, shewed enough that *Origen* owned the Rule of Scripture. *Protestants* as well as *Origen*, would not have men be deluded by the subtilty of any Hereticks, who pretend to urge Scripture; and yet they no more thereby disown its being a Rule of Doctrine, than our Saviour did disown it as a Rule of Life, when he would not be tempted by the Devils citing the words of Scripture, to act against its commands.

SECT.

SECT. XII.

What was the Rule of Faith *owned by* Tertullian?

THree Discourses of *Tertullian* are referred to by this Discourser. The first of which is *de Præscriptione adversus Hæreticos*, cited *Corol.* 15. where *he will not allow Hereticks to argue out of Scripture.* The design of this Treatise of *Tertullian*, is to evidence that the Doctrine professed in the Church of Christ, was the true Christian Doctrine, against such Hereticks (which were of the same mold with them *Irenæus* and *Origen* opposed) who either *would not admit the Scriptures*, cap. 17. *or else changed the very proprieties of the words, not allowing their known significations, but imagining in them strange things, which no way appear*; which was the way of the *Valentinians*, *c.* 38. And *these Hereticks were not satisfied with what was delivered by Christ and his Apostles, but produced other things*, c. 8. Against these, he pleads prescription as to the true Christian Doctrine, as being from the Apostles, and having Communion with them. He shews, *there is no disputing with such Hereticks from Scripture, since they will not stand to it*, c. 17, 18. And since these Hereticks did not own the only God, and Jesus Christ, and the holy Spirit, *c.* 7. and 13, 14. He urgeth, *That they were not to be allowed to argue from the Scriptures against the Church, since they were not Christians, and owned them not*, c. 15, 16, 17. And *therefore it must first be inquired from whom the Scriptures were, and by whom, and to whom, and when delivered*: all which would shew, *that they were for them who followed Christ and his Apostles, in the Doctrine by them publickly delivered, which these Hereticks pretended not to do.* Hence it appears, that what *Tertullian* here writes, is no way against the Doctrine of *Protestants*; but in such a case as this was, they would themselves assert the same. 1.

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Now though it is impossible the Scriptures should be either a directing Rule, or a convincing, to those persons who reject them, yet in this Treatise *Tertullian* owns them as such to Christians who receive them, and withal asserts them as necessary to the Faith, as may appear from these particulars, *c.* 22. He declares, That *they who receive not that Scripture, the Acts of the Apostles, cannot acknowledge that the Holy Ghost was sent to the Disciples; nor can they prove how, when, and by what means the Body of Christs Church was instituted.* c. 33. He prescribes against the *Hereticks* from the Apostles Writings, *c.* 36. He hath these words; *Run through the Churches of the Apostles, amongst which their very Authentick Letters are recited, sounding the voice, and representing the face of every one of them.* What else is this but to equal the delivery by the Scriptures, with that which was from the mouths of all the Apostles? In the same Chapter he saith, *John the Apostle puts together the Law and the Prophets, with the Evangelical and Apostolical Letters, and thence tenders this Faith to us to drink in.* To add but one place more, *c.* 38. He saith, of the Hereticks, *As the corruption of the Doctrine could never succeed without the corruption of the instruments; so we could not have the integrity of Doctrine, without the integrity of those things by which the Doctrine is delivered:* then he adds, *What the Scriptures are, we are; we are from them from their beginning*; and then shews, that the Church doth keep them perfect, which the Hereticks do not.

2. Next he cites *Tertullian de carne Christi*; where *c.* 2. He supposeth, *That upon this account* Marcion *did blot out so many original instruments (that is, Scriptures) least the flesh of Christ should be proved.* By *what Authority?* (saith *Tertullian*) *I pray, if thou be a Prophet, foretel something; if an Apostle, preach it openly; if an Apostolical man, agree with the Apostles,* (and then follow the words cited by this Author) *If thou be only a Christian, believe what is delivered.* Where it is manifest, these words referr not to recommend to us *Oral Tradition*, but the *Canon of Scripture.* Soon after he tells *Marcion*,

cion, that he is not a Chriſtian, but once was, and now hath reſcinded what he then believed (where follow the next words referred to by this Author). *By reſcinding what thou haſt believed*, thou *proveſt that before thou didſt reſcind it, that was otherwiſe, which thou didſt believe otherwiſe. So it was delivered; moreover, what was delivered, that was true as delivered by thoſe whom it belonged to deliver*, &c. which words are of the ſame nature with the former, and further condemn his reſcinding, or cutting off from the Scriptures, thoſe things which he once believed, and were faithfully delivered: for *reſcindere* is not here to renounce, as this *Diſcourſer* tranſlates it, but to cut off or mutilate (which indeed proves, that it was otherwiſe before) and this is the ſame in ſenſe, with what he calls *his rejecting ſome Scriptures*, c. 3. *his blotting out*, ch. 4. *his taking them away*, c. 5. and the ſame with what in this 2. *ch.* he a little before called *his blotting out the inſtruments* (of Scripture) where having propounded the queſtion, by what Authority he did it; and continuing his Diſcourſe on the ſame ſubject, after theſe words of *reſcinding*, he gives this anſwer; *Thou haſt done it by no right at all.* Yet further, that in this Diſcourſe, *de Carne Chriſti*, he intended the Scripture for his *Rule of Faith*, may be proved from *ch. 6* where ſpeaking of the Body which Angels appear in; *Whence it is*, ſaith he, *nothing is manifeſt concerning it; becauſe the Scripture doth not declare it*, c. 15. He urgeth againſt *Valentinus* ſeven Texts of Scripture, all which declare Chriſt to be Man; and ſaith, *theſe only ought to ſuffice for preſcription, to teſtifie his humane fleſh, and not ſpiritual*, &c. c. 22. when he had uſed many other Scriptures, he ſaith, *The Apoſtle determineth all this Controverſie, when he declares him to be* Abrahams Seed; and then cites *Gal.* 3. adding, *We who read and believe theſe things, what kind of fleſh, may we, or ought we to acknowledge in Chriſt? ſurely none other than* Abraham *had.*

In the laſt place, this *Diſcourſer* cites two paſſages of *Tertullian* againſt *Marcion*, to prove that the preſent Church contains in it the true Doctrine of Chriſt. Now if it did 3.

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so in *Tertullian*'s time it is no way consequent that any particular Church must do so now, unless it be by delivery of the same Scriptures. The first place he cites, but names not the Book, is, *lib.* 4. *cont. Marc. l.* 5. where *Tertullian*'s design is, to declare the *Ecclesiastical Tradition* in the Scriptures, to be preferred before what *Marcion* tenders, as his emending the Gospel, and so confirms the Protestant Doctrine. For having observed that *Marcion* rejects the other *Evangelists*, and corrupteth *Luke*, He saith in the end of the fourth *ch. From the times of* Tiberius, *to* Antonine, *we meet with* Marcion, *as the first and only emender of the Gospel.* And he observes his emending confirms ours, whilst he emends that which he found first, (then follow the words cited by this Authour) In short, *If it be manifest, that is the more true, which was the former; and that was the former which is from the beginning; that from the beginning which is from the Apostles: in like manner that will manifestly appear to be delivered from the Apostles, which is accounted Sacred in the Churches of the Apostles.* In which words, *Tertullian* designs to establish the Scripture-writings against the Heretical corruption. Whence it follows, *Let us see what Milk the* Corinthians *drew from* Paul; *to what Rule the* Galatians *were corrected; What the* Philippians, Thessalonians *and* Ephesians, *read*, &c. so that *Tertullian* sends to the Scriptures, which may be read.

4. Another testimony he ventures at, is *lib.* 1. *cont. Marc.* and saith it is more expres: but indeed makes nothing at all for *Oral Tradition.* For this first Book being written to prove one only God, against *Marcion*, who in a Treatise called his *Antitheses*, endeavoured to shew, that there was not the same God in the Old Testament, and in the New: He observes, *c.* 20. that *some said that* Marcion *did not innovate the Rule, but set it right when it was corrupted*, c. 21. He sheweth, *the Apostles never delivered any such thing as this; but fully asserted one and the same God. Nor was there ever any question about this in their daies: for as there were questions about things offered to Idols, about Marriage and Divorce,*

about

about veiling Women, and the hope of the Resurrection, (in which he plainly refers to the Apostles writings): so he saith, if *there had been any Question about this matter, it would have been found as a most principal thing in the Apostle* (that is the Apostles writings) and then adds the words cited by this *Discourser*: And *no other is to be acknowledged the Tradition of the Apostles, than that which is this day published in their Churches.* In which words, as *Irenæus*, and *Tertullian* elsewhere did against Heretical inventions in general, so he here establisheth the Churches *Tradition* against *Marcions* innovation: or he establisheth the Doctrine of Christ, as his Church received it, which principally included the Scriptures. And that *Tertullian*, chiefly designed against *Marcion*, to establish the *Scriptural Tradition*, may appear sufficiently from what hath been above observed.

To see yet more of *Tertullians* mind in this case, observe that known place against *Hermogenes*, who asserted matter co-eternal with God. *Adverſ. Hermog.* c. 22. *I adore the fulness of Scripture which manifests to me both the maker and his works. But whether all things be made out of a subject matter I never yet read*; *Let* Hermogenes *his shop shew it written: If it be not written, let him fear that woe, that is denounced against them who add or take away.* What can be more full to shew the Scripture to be a *Rule of Faith*, than to declare that nothing may safely be received but from it, and that it is full and compleat? 5.

SECT. XIII.

What Clemens Alexandrinus *held as the* Rule of Faith.

1. FRom this Father he only cites one place, and that so much contrary to the plain design, which is obvious to any eye, that it appears evidently, he never took it from *Clemens* himself, but hath in practice discovered what certainty there is in his *Oral way*, or taking things upon hearsay. For shewing which nothing more is needful, than the setting down the words of *Clemens* more largely. *Strom. lib.* 7. He saith, *In those who are indued with knowledge, the holy Scriptures have conceived; but the Hereticks who have not learned them, have rejected them as if they did not conceive: some indeed follow the truths saying, and others wrest the Scriptures to their own lusts: but if they had a Judgment of true and false, they would have been perswaded by the Divine Scriptures.* (Then follow the words cited) *If therefore any one, of a man becomes a Beast, like those inchanted by* Circe: *so he hath lost his being a man of God, and one remaining faithful to the Lord, who kicks against Ecclesiastical Tradition, and leaps into the opinions of humane Heresies.* (Then his next words are) *but he who returning out of error obeys the Scriptures, and commits his life to the truth; of a man in a manner becomes as God. We have the Lord the original of this Doctrine, both by the Prophets, and by the Gospel, and by the Apostles. He who is to be believed of himself, is worthy of all belief,* (when he speaks) *in the Lords voice, and the Scriptures. Doubtless the Scriptures we use as our* Criterion, *to find out things.* And *then* he shews, *That we are not satisfied with what men say, but inquire and believe what God saith, which is the only demonstration; according to which Science, they who have tasted only of the Scriptures are faithful.* What can be more plain than that

that *Clemens* his design here, is not to guide men to the *Oral* way, this *Discourser* talks of; but as *Origen* and *Tertullian* do, so also *Clemens*, against the way of the ancient Hereticks, who were opposers of the Scripture, commendeth the Churches *Tradition*, which was in the Scripture. Much more might be observed to this purpose, from this 7. *Strom.* of *Clemens*, and several other places, but that I think the very place this Author blindfoldly chose, is sufficient against him.

SECT. XIV.

What was owned as the Rule of Faith *by* Athanasius.

OUr *Discourser* wisheth *Protestants* would seriously weigh the Sayings of this Father, and consider what sustained him who was a Pillar of Faith in his daies. This, we assure him, we will do; and likewise highly honor that *Rule of Faith*, which *Athanasius* made use of; which we know was not *Oral Tradition*, but Scripture. The first testimony he produceth from *Athanasius*, is in his Epistle *de Synodis Arim. & Seleuc.* where speaking of the *Arians* who were not satisfied in the *Council* of *Nice*, but sought after some other Synodical determination, where they might have the Faith; and therefore procured another *Council* to be called; he saith, *Now they have declared themselves to be unbelievers, in seeking that which they have not*: (which are part of the words cited by this *Discourser*: his following words, I think, cannot be found either in that Book, or elsewhere in *Athanasius*, which are) *All therefore that are seekers of Faith* 1.

are unbelievers. They only to whom Faith comes down from their Ancestors, that is, from Christ by Fathers, do not seek, and therefore they only have Faith; if thou comest to Faith by seeking, thou wast before an Unbeliever. Thus far this Discourser I think frames *Athanasius*. Against the *Arians* in this Epistle *Athanasius* further saies; *If they had believed, they would not have sought it as if they had it not, and if you have wrote these things as now beginning to believe, you are not Clergy-men, but begin to be Catechumens.* Which words he writes upon occasion, that the *Arians* Confession began not, *So believes the Catholick Church; but the Catholick Faith was in the presence of* Constantius, *put forth such a day*, as *Athanasius* there declares. But that we may understand *Athanasius* his mind, where they who are Believers must have Faith, and not elsewhere seek it: (which also is the way he must understand it to come from Ancestors, if any such words be any where in *Athanasius*) in this very Epistle he declares it thus. *It is a vain thing that they running about, pretend to desire Synods for the Faith; for the holy Scripture is more sufficient than all Synods. And if for this there should be need of a Synod, there are the Acts of the Holy Fathers, they who came together in* Nice, *wrote so well, that whoever faithfully read their Writings, may by them be remembred of that Religion towards Christ, which is declared in the holy Scriptures.* So that these words of *Athanasius* as they design not the promoting *Oral Tradition*, so they do advance Scripture.

2. The next testimony cited, and vainly flourished over, is from *Athan. de Incarn.* against *Paulus Samosatenus*, where he concerning this Subject of the Incarnation of the Word, shews, That *such great things, and difficult to be apprehended, cannot be attained to, but by Faith. And they who have weak knowledge, if they here reject not curious questions, and keep to the Faith, ruine themselves. Wherefore* (saith he) *blessed* Paul *saith, Great is the mystery of Godliness, God manifest in the flesh*, &c. A little after he saith, *To make an exact search, is that few can do, but to hold fast the Faith belongs to all who*

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are perswaded by God. Then follow the words cited: *He that searcheth after that which is above his reach, is in danger, but he who abides in the things delivered, is out of danger. Wherefore we perswade you, as also we perswade our selves, to keep the Faith delivered, and avoid prophane words of novelty,* (thus far this *Discourser* cites, but then follows) *and to fear an inquisitive search into so great Mysteries, but to confess, that God was manifest in the flesh, according to the Apostles Tradition.* By this view of the whole sense of *Athanasius*, it is evident, he designs to put them off from curious questions, about these high Mysteries, to relie on the written Scripture-*Tradition*, which in these words he refers to. And in the same *Treatise* he urgeth other Scriptures to confirm this point, using these words concerning Scripture-testimony: it *speaketh evidently*, it *teacheth us as manifestly.*

The last testimony he cites from *Athanasius*, is in his Epistle to *Epictetus*; where inveighing against him who wrote, that Christs Body was consubstantial to his Divinity; he indeed saith, *That things that are so manifestly evil, it is not fit to lay them further open, or spend more time about them, lest thereby contentious men should judge them doubtful.* (Then follow the words by this Author referred to) *it is sufficient to answer to such things, and say, that these things are not of the Catholick Church, nor did our Fathers so think.* But his next words are, *But lest our silence should make them shameless, it is requisite to speak something from the holy Scriptures.* And after many arguments from Scriptures, saith, *Wherefore let them confess that they have erred, being perswaded by the holy Scriptures.* So that we see he no way rejects the Scriptures from being his Rule, though he said as *Protestants* also will, that some *Heresies* may be so absurd, that it is enough against them, to shew them contrary to all anciently received Doctrine, and the Catholick Church: and yet even in these he referred to Scripture, as the best means of conviction. 3.

Though the judgement of *Athanasius* be already sufficiently manifest, I shall briefly refer to two other testimonies. 4.

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One is a fragment of his 39. Epistle, where when he had reckoned the Books of Scripture, he saith, *These are the wells of Salvation, in these only is the Doctrine of Godliness declared; Let no man add any thing to these, nor take any thing from them.* Another testimony is observable amongst his various Treatises, against divers Heresies; he hath one (which concerns this *Discourser*: and if as some think it be *Theodoret*'s Treatise, it will still be of use to us) against them, *Who say men should not search out of Scriptures, but be satisfied with their own Faith.* Where very much to our purpose, I only mention one short expression. *Wouldest thou that I should reject the Scriptures, where then shall I have knowledge? Wouldest thou that I should forsake knowledge, where then should I have Faith?* But I suppose I need add no more to evidence that *Athanasius* made Scripture the *Rule of Faith.*

SECT. XV.

What was owned as the Rule of Faith, *by S.* Basil?

1. OUr *Discourser* likewise pretends to have S. *Basil* on his side, from whom he cites two testimonies, which must be examined. The first whereof is to be found in his first Book against *Eunomius*; where when *Eunomius* requires them who hear or read him, not to attribute any thing to the greater party, or the multitude, or the dignity of persons; S. *Basil* answers in the words this Authour refers to: *Shall we being perswaded by thee, judge the Tradition which in all Ages past hath prevailed under so many holy men, more dishonourable than your impious conceits.* But is this to make *Tradition* a *Rule of Faith?* When I say, that

I will account more honourably of S. *Basil*'s Judgement, than of this *Discoursers* fond conceits; do I by this make S. *Basil* the *Rule of Faith*? And why may not S. *Basil* prefer other Catholick Teachers before *Eunomius*, and yet not make them a *Rule of Faith*? Yea, it is evident from the very place, he designs not here to speak of the *Rule of Faith*, but to speak against the arrogancy of *Eunomius*; yet in this Book, he urgeth many things from the Scriptures, with such Prefaces to them as these: *We will demonstrate from the Scripture. We are taught of the Scripture. How accurately and evidently they testifie.* And these things seem to make Scripture a *Rule of Faith.*

His other testimony is from S. *Basil* against the *Sabellions*, *Arians*, and *Anomæans*; where observing, that those Hereticks delighted in some Sophistical niceties, and did not entertain the plain delivery in the Scriptures, which was confirmed by the Fathers, he exhorts in these words; *Lest thou shouldest separate the Spirit from the Father and the Son*, (then follow the words cited by this *Discourser*) *Let Tradition deterr thee, the Lord taught so, the Apostles preached so, the Fathers conserved it, the Martyrs confirmed it: let it suffice thee to speak as thou art taught.* And then he adds, *Away with these pieces of Sophistry, either the Spirit is unbegotten, or begotten; if he be unbegotten, he is the Father; if he be begotten, he is the Son; if neither, he is then a Creature.* Now that in this place, he chiefly intends the confirmation of the *Tradition* in Scripture, and the *Councils decisions* agreeable to this holy Scripture, is evident from the design of his whole Book, wherein he proves the truth by Scripture, and thus declares his own sense, not long before concerning the holy Spirit. *We exhort you, that you would not seek to hear of us any time that which is pleasing to your selves, but that which is well pleasing to the Lord, and agreeable to the Scriptures, and not contrary to the Fathers.* These words plead for the Rule of Scriptures, not against them.

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3. But that more clearly we may understand the opinion of S. *Basil* concerning the *Rule of Faith*; I shall refer to his Treatise of *Faith*, *Tom.* 2. where he declares, *That he would keep himself to what he had received from the Scriptures of Divine inspiration.* And a little after saith, *It is a manifest falling off from the Faith, and evidence of Pride, either to reject any thing of those things that are written, or to bring in any thing of those things that are not written: when our Lord Jesus Christ himself saith, My Sheep will hear my voice.* What words could be more full to shew what he owned for the *Rule of Faith?*

SECT. XVI.

What was by S. Austin *accounted the* Rule of Faith?

1. THis *Discourser* tells us, he must not omit S. *Austin.* I confess, I wonder how he adventured to produce him, when it is so manifestly apparent, that he very frequently and exceeding fully declared his opinion, for the Scripture being the *Rule of Faith.* 1. He cites S. *Austin, contra Epist. Manich. quam vocant Fundamenti,* in which he brings in the *Manichee,* c. 14. saying, *That he doth not promise any perfect Science; but such things are shewed to him, and that they to whom they are told, ought to believe him in those things which they know not.* To which he answers, *If I must believe things unknown,* (then follow the words this Authour refers to) *Why should I not rather believe those things that are now celebrated by the consent of learned and unlearned, and are confirmed amongst all people, by most grave Authority?* Here he prefers the consent and fame of the Church, before that of the

the *Manichee*: but this is far from making it a *Rule of Faith*, but only maketh it the more conſiderable motive: and yet in thoſe things wherein learned and unlearned conſent; Scripture may be their Rule to believe them. And S. *Auſtin* declares, *Ep.* 3. that there are obvious things in Scripture, which it ſpeaks to the heart both of the learned and unlearned.

What he next adds as ſpoken in the ſame Book by S *Auſtin*, *The Authority of the Catholick Church, is of force to cauſe Faith and aſſurance; which* (Authority) *from the beſt eſtabliſhed ſeats of the Apoſtles, even to this very day is ſtrengthned by the ſeries of Biſhops ſucceeding them, and by the aſſertion of ſo many Nations.* Theſe words I find not in that Treatiſe. He indeed there ſaith, *c.* 5. *That he had not believed the Goſpel, if the Authority of the Catholick Church had not moved him:* whence it may be inferred, that he makes the Authority of the *Catholick Church*, ſufficient to cauſe Faith as a Motive to it: and indeed, this is all can be inferred from theſe words here cited. And yet it is obſervable, that the Authority of the *Catholick Church*, which was ſo great a Motive to S. *Auſtin*, did not confine it ſelf to the preſent Church, but included the Primitive Church, whence, *c.* 3. he calls *it an Authority begun by Miracles, nouriſhed by hope, increaſed by Charity, and confirmed by Antiquity.* 2.

His laſt teſtimony from S. *Auſtin* is, I think, miſ-cited as to the place, but the words are (but not in *Ep.* 58. which is not S. *Auſtins*) *The faithful do poſſeſs perſeveringly a* Rule of Faith, *common to little and great in the Church.* But why may not this be the Scripture? can it not be common to little and great, according to S. *Auſtin*'s language? Who tells us *Ep.* 3. *By the Scriptures bad underſtandings are corrected, little ones are nouriſhed, and great ones are delighted.* 3.

That S. *Auſtin* makes the Scripture a *Rule of Faith*, I might very largely ſhew, though I ſuppoſe a few expreſſions may ſuffice; *Ep.* 157. *Where the thing by nature obſcure is above our capacity, and the Divine Scriptures doth not plain-* 4.

ly afford its assistance, here humane conjecture rashly presumes to determine any thing. And if we would have the word [*Rule*] he saith, *De bono Viduitatis: Wherefore should I teach thee any thing more than what we read in the Apostle; for the holy Scripture fixeth the Rule of our Doctrine, lest we should attempt to know more than we ought to know.* De Civ. Dei, lib. 13. c. 18. *The City of God believeth the holy Scriptures both Old and New, which we call Canonical, from thence Faith it self is conceived, out of which the just man liveth.* I will yet add only one testimony more, *De literis Petiliani, Lib.* 3. *c.* 6. *If any one, I will not say, if we, no way to be compared to him,* who said, *Though we*; but as in the following words he added, *If an Angel from Heaven should preach unto you, either concerning Christ, or his Church, or any other thing which belongs to our Faith or Life; besides what you have received in the Legal and Evangelical Scriptures, let him be accursed.* But enough now of this famous Father.

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SECT. XVII.

What Petrus Chrysologus *owned as the* Rule of Faith?

THE last Father referred to by our *Discourser*, is *Petrus Chrysologus*, from whom he only cites one testimony, *Serm.* 85. where speaking of Festivals, from those words in S. *John* 7. At the midst of the Feast, Jesus went up into the Temple, he saith, *A Christian mind knows not how* (*in desperationem deducere*, a harsh phrase, which this *Discourser* seems to read *disputationem*, and so translates *to bring into dispute*, but I rather think it should be *despicationem*) *to bring into contempt those things which are strengthned by the Tradition of the Fathers, and by time it self.* But however we read it, this being spoken of Festivals, speaks nothing concerning the delivery of Doctrines. 1.

But I will see if I can meet with something, that will speak his mind as to the *Rule of Faith.* In his 99. *Serm.* of the Parable of the Leaven: *The Woman who took the Leaven, is the Church; the Leaven is the Mystery of Heavenly Doctrine; the three measures in which its said she hid the Leaven, are the Law, the Prophets, and the Gospels, where the Divine sense is hid and covered by the mystical word, that it is not hid from the Believer, but is hid from the unbeliever.* Serm. 112. upon *Rom.* 5. Concerning Original sin, he saith, *This day the Apostles speech did fully give in it self with apparent light, to the sense of them who heard it, nor did it leave any thing doubtful to Catholick minds.* Serm. 18. upon 1 *Cor.* 15. He saith, *Lest any one should dare to doubt of the Resurrection of the Dead, we have caused this day to be read to you the large Lesson of blessed* Paul, *asserting it by his authority, and by examples, to which our Sermon can find nothing that it can add.* Now that where all matters of Divine 2.

Faith are contained, and which gives clear light concerning matters of Faith, yea so fully, that nothing can be added, and removes all doubts concerning matters of Faith, (all which he asserts concerning Scriptures) must needs be a *Rule of Faith.*

I have now done with the Fathers, and discovered that all those he chose to be of his side, have disowned his opinion, and fixed upon that Scriptural *Rule of Faith*, which Protestants own.

SECT. XVIII.

Answering the remainder of his Discourse.

1. BUT because §.15. he supposeth he hath there given a few notes, which will make all testimonies of *Fathers*, for *Scripture* against *Tradition*, lose their edge: I will examine them.

2. His first Note is, *That in almost all his citations of Councils*, and *Fathers, they speak directly against Heretiks*; which *puts them to declare what fixed them Catholicks.* Now from this first Note, since I have shewed, that in all such places they own Scripture for the *Rule of Faith*, the citations to that purpose, are the more firm for Scripture.

3. His second Note is to consider, *Whether when Fathers speak highly of Scripture, as that it contains all Faith*, &c. *whether they speak of Scripture sensed, or as yet to be sensed?* Truly if he be a man of reason, he will easily see that, when the *Fathers* urge Scriptures as manifestly declaring the truth, against their opposers, who as yet disown the sense, or to Doubters who do not yet own it fully; they must needs mean the Scriptures, without any sense imposed upon

on them otherwiſe, than as the words will of themſelves diſcover the ſenſe of him who wrote them. For this would be a weak way to diſpute from Scriptures, (as the Fathers generally did with them who owned them) if they ſhould ſay, we will evidence it from Scriptures, but you muſt then firſt ſuppoſe them to mean as we mean. By this means the Scripture can give no evidence or light to any truth in queſtion, which is contrary to the whole current of our citations, from the *Fathers*.

The third Note is, *That it is frequent with the Fathers, to force Hereticks to accept the ſenſe of Scripture, from thoſe who gave them the Letter of Scripture, and frequent to ſenſe the Letter (even when dark) by Tradition, but never to bend Tradition to the outward ſhew of the Letter.* As to the firſt clauſe of urging upon Hereticks, the ſenſe which they own from whom they received the Letter: The Fathers never urged this but in ſome ſpecial caſe: when *Hereticks*, ſuch as *Valentinian*, and ſome others, who could ſcarce be called receivers of the Scripture-Letter, diſowned the known and common ſignifications of words in Scriptures, and introduced wonderful ſtrange ones. Here to preſerve the Faithful, confirm the Doubtful, and reduce the wandring, they urged the Churches Authority, or *Eccleſiaſtical Tradition* of Doctrines, and common delivery of ſignifications of words, as more conſiderable than ſuch ſenſibly monſtrous innovations: yet this was in things where, to men unprejudiced, and willing to receive truth, they would appear plainly from the very words of Scripture. And this is conſiſtent (if there were the like cauſe) with the Principles of *Proteſtants*, as with any others. In other caſes the *Fathers* urged againſt the *Hereticks* evident arguments from the light of Scripture-Letter. Nor did they ſenſe Scripture by *Tradition* in hard Texts of Scripture, otherwiſe than *Proteſtants* will do; that is where any aſſertion is known to be a point of Faith, and ſurely grounded upon Scripture, neither they nor we will ſo interpret any dark Scripture, as to oppoſe ſuch a point of Faith: and in many other things 4.

will

will allow *Tradition* its degree of authority. But that they never bent *Tradition* to Scriptures *Letter*, is very untrue. When any truly Catholick Doctrine held by the Church, was questioned or impugned, was not *Tradition* bent to Scriptures *Letter*, when they applyed themselves to it, to declare and manifest such Doctrine? Which was the general practice of the Ancients, as hath been shewed. But would they ever so bend *Tradition* to *Scripture*, as to close with Scripture in rejecting *Tradition*? If that which is delivered by *Catholick Bishops* be a *Tradition*, S. *Austin de Unitate Eccles.* c. 10. sayes, *We must not consent with Catholick Bishops, if they think any thing against the Scriptures of God.* But did ever any of the Ancient Fathers say, that we must not agree with Scripture, if it speaks against what the *Bishops*, who are called *Catholick*, do deliver?

5. His last Note is a very vain and empty one: *That they cannot hold Scripture thus interpretable, the* Rule of Faith; *because most Hereticks against whom they wrote, held it theirs, and therefore could not be Hereticks, since they held the Rule.* But *first*, those *Hereticks* who pretended to own Scripture (who were not the most) did not perfectly hold the same Rule, with Catholicks who held to Scripture as their Rule. The Catholicks Rule is Scripture, as the words will naturally hold forth the true and genuine sense: but the Rule of Hereticks who pretended to Scripture, is Scripture, as the words are wilfully perverted, contrary to their natural and plain sense and meaning. But again, why may not they be Hereticks, who profess to hold the *Rule of Faith*, if they take no heed to be guided by that Rule, and reject Doctrines declared by it? cannot reason be a Rule in Philosophy, because two parties both pretend to reason?

6. I have now dismissed his testimonies. In the last place, he undertakes to shew, *That the Council of* Trent, *and the present Church of* Rome, *own this way of Oral and Practical Tradition.* Now though I could shew that in the present Church of *Rome*, where this Author pretends so great a clear-

clearness of Tradition, they are not yet agreed upon the first principle of Traditionary Doctrine. Yet since I have enough shewed the dissent of this his opinion from the truth, and the Ancient Church; and therefore if they all were of this Authors opinion, it will neither make any thing for their own Doctrine, nor against the Protestants: I will for my part let him injoy the fruit of his labours in this particular, fearing most that Papists will indeavour in this point to deal with Protestants, as we above observed, that the *Arians* did with the ancient Catholicks; that is, like *Chamælions*, change their shape, and when they were confuted in one way, they opposed the truth in another.

Μόνῳ Θεῷ δόξα.

SERMONS

PREACHED

UPON

Several Occasions.

BY

WILLIAM FALKNER, D.D.

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A SERMON

Preached at *Lyn-St. Margaret's*, at the

Bishop's VISITATION,

Octob. 15. 1677.

2 COR. 5. 18.

—And hath given to us the Ministry of Reconciliation.

THAT the Christian Religion is of mighty Efficacy for the reforming the World, is not only evinced from the Nature of the Doctrine it self, but from that visible Difference which appeared between the Lives of the true Primitive Christians, and other Men; insomuch that *Eusebius* tells us, that Christianity became greatly fam'd every where, διὰ τὸν ἐν βίῳ τρόπον, by the Purity of Life in them who embraced it. But as no sick Man Hist. Eccles. l. 2. c. 13. gr.

can rationally expect any Relief againſt his Diſtemper, by the Directions of the beſt Phyſicians, unleſs he will obſerve them: So it is not to be wondred, if many who own the Name of Chriſtianity, without ſincere ſubmiſſion thereto, have Lives unſuitable to this Profeſſion. Hence ſome of them practiſe open Viciouſneſs, Looſeneſs and Debauchery; and others embrace Pride, Uncharitableneſs, and Diſobedience, all which are diametrically oppoſite to the Spirit of Chriſt. Hence alſo many who pretend an high reſpect to the Holy Jeſus, do ſlight his peculiar Inſtitution, undervaluing the Uſe even of that Prayer which our Lord compoſed and enjoined; the Communion of that Catholick Church, which he founded and built upon a Rock; the Attendance upon that Holy Sacrament which he appointed the Night he was betrayed; and the Reverence for that Miniſtry, which he hath eſtabliſhed in his Church, and the Benefit of which theſe Words in part declare, in that God hath *given to us the Miniſtry of Reconciliation.*

In which Words I ſhall conſider,

I. The Nature and Excellency of this Miniſtry in general, without reſpect to the diſtinction of its Offices; it is the *Miniſtry of Reconciliation.*

II. The Perſons to whom this Miniſtry is committed; that is, *to Us.*

III. The Divine Authority by which it is founded.

I. The Nature and Excellency of this Miniſtry. And becauſe it is an holy Function committed to ſome particular Perſons by God himſelf, the main Buſineſs thereof cannot conſiſt in ſpeaking or doing ſuch Things as may be ſaid or done by other Men, but in the diſcharge of a ſpecial Office. And an Office, tho it requireth Abilities in them who undertake it, yet is chiefly conveyed by Commiſſion and Authority. It is poſſible that *Corah*, or ſome other of his Company, might be as well acquainted with the Rites of Sacri-

Sacrificing, and the way of ordering the Incense, as *Aaron* and his Sons were; but if they, not being called of God thereto, will invade the Priesthood, they must bear their Sin.

Wherefore I design to discourse here of the chief and proper Charge and Business of the Gospel-Ministry, which must include the Dignity thereof. And here I shall shew,

1. What is contained in it, in four Heads.
2. What must be rejected from it.

1. As God's Officers, they are to prepare Persons for receiving the Blessings of the Gospel. And because the Wrath of God will come on the Children of Disobedience, and the way to be happy is by the Faith of Christ, and becoming holy and good; the Officers of the Christian Church, by a peculiar Authority, are publickly to declare the Doctrines of Faith, and the great Certainty and Evidence thereof, to make Men well-grounded Christians, and the Directions and Rules of holy Life, together with the great Motives which tend to perswade the practice of them. They are called διδασκαλοι, Teachers; and the Instruction of the πρεσβυτερων appears as anciently as from *Justin Martyr*, to be one part of their publick Performances in the Church: And the Practice hereof is commended in the Scriptures, and the ancient Writers, as early as *Ignatius*, exhorting πάντας παρακαλεῖν ἵνα σώζωνται, to exhort and perswade all Men for their Salvation.

Just. Mart. Apol. 2.

Ignat. Epist. ad *Polycarp.*

And these Instructions are to be accounted of greater moment, because delivered by those to whom God hath granted his Commission; as the declaring the Law, or giving a Charge by a Judg, or particular Officer, is more than the Discourse of a private Person. The Flock of Christ ought to have such a respect to the Shepherds he hath appointed, as to think it their Duty to be taught and guided by them: Since our Saviour declared not only concerning his Apostles, but even of the Seventy, *He who heareth you, heareth me*; and more generally with a Note

Mat. 10. 40.

of

Luke 16. 16. Joh. 13. 20. of Remark concerning all those who are sent by him, that *he who receiveth them, receiveth him.*

To this Head also belongeth another part of Ministerial Power, in preparing Men for God's Blessing, which was more remarkably exercised under the vigour of Primitive Discipline, in enjoining particular Rules for, and examining the Probation-State of the *Catechumeni*, who from Paganism embraced Christianity, and of them who for their Offences came under the then severe Discipline of Penitents. This Authority the Apostle made use of in this Epistle concerning the Incestuous *Corinthian*, declaring his Grief and Punishment to have been sufficient; and this was, as both *Baronius* and *Illyricus* think, in the next Year after the Sentence of his Excommunication was inflicted.

2 Cor. 2. 6, 7.

Baron. an. 57. 1. & 58. 36. *Illyr.* Præfat. ad Ep. *Pauli.*

And besides the present Interest of Ministerial Power, with respect to Rules of open Discipline, it is of great use for them who have exposed their Souls to great Dangers; and also for disquieted Minds, in such Cases as press their Consciences, to take the particular Counsel of their Guides, whom God hath appointed to *watch for their Souls.* Which might be a great Help to secure some from their growing Perplexities, and others from running on in Viciousness, or turning aside unto Delusions.

Heb. 13. 17.

2. This Function contains an Authority from God to receive Persons under the Terms of Reconciliation, and to bless them in God's Name. As they are Stewards of the Mysteries of God, they have a peculiar Right to dispense to his People his holy Sacraments, as signal Pledges of his Grace and Favour. Hereupon they who receive *Baptism* at their hands, being duly qualified for it, receive thereby Remission of Sins, become Members of Christ, and Heirs of Salvation. And as St. *Paul* was directed to be baptized, and wash away his Sins; so the Christian Church hath generally acknowledged Baptism to be, as *Clemens Alexandrinus* expresseth it, λουτρὸν εἰς τὸν ἀμαρτίας ἀποθεμένοι, the Laver to make us clean from our Sins. And the ordinary dispensing Baptism, is a proper Act of the Ministerial

Acts 22. 16. *Clem. Alex. Pad.* l. 1. c. 6.

Power,

Power, both in that Christ gave commission to his Apostles to baptize, and especially because this is a particular Exercise of the Keys, in receiving Members into the Church of Christ; and is also the dispensing the Symbol of Remission of Sins, which is included under that Commission of Christ, *Whose soever Sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them.* John 20. 23.

In the *Holy Communion* also the pious and penitent Christian receiveth at the hands of him who by his Office dispenseth it, the Mystical Body and Blood of Christ, and a Testimony of God's Favour and Blessing. And because this Sacrament is the Application of Christ's Sacrifice offered for the *Remission of Sins*, a devout, humble and penitent Person doth hereby receive Pardon; to which purpose St. *Ambrose*, *Qui manducaverit hoc corpus, fiet ei remissio peccatorum.* And again, *Debeo illum (Sanguinem) semper accipere, ut semper mihi peccata dimittantur.* Which Words speak the receiving the Body and Blood of Christ in this Sacrament to include Remission of Sins. And the dispensing and consecrating this holy Sacrament, must needs be proper to the special Officers of the *Christian Church*, since no Man, without God's particular Authority, can dispense and consecrate the Pledges of his Grace, and of Remission of Sins, as rendred from him. De Sacrament. l. 4. c. 5, 6.

The pronouncing *Absolution* by them to whom the Gospel giveth this Authority, doth also from God tender and apply Remission of Sins to the Pious and Contrite, by virtue of our Saviour's Words, *Whose Sins ye remit, they are remitted*; but by no means to the Disobedient and Negligent. The *Augustine* Confession declareth Absolution to be highly esteemed, *quia fit Vox Dei, & mandato Dei pronunciatur*; as being the Voice of God, and pronounced by his Command. Conf. August. cap. de Confes.

In like manner the giving a Benediction or Blessing by them, whether generally in the Publick Service, or more particularly in some special Offices, is an Application of the Blessing of God, by his Authority, unto the pious Christian,

Christian, but not to the Wicked and Evil-doers. Even in *Aaron's* blessing the People, God declared that he himself would bless them. And the whole intention of the Gospel is a Dispensation of Gods Blessing, which cometh upon them who serve him. The Blessed Jesus was sent to Bless, in turning Men from their Iniquities; to such he begins his Sermon in the Mount with Blessing; and this also was the last action he performed immediately upon his Ascension into Heaven. Most of the Apostolical Epistles both begin and end with Benedictions, which persons partake of according to their pious qualifications: For when not only the Apostles, but also the seventy were commanded to pronounce Peace to the House or Place where they came, (שלום or Peace, being, according to the usual Jewish Phrase, a comprehension of all Blessing) our Saviour tells them, that if the Son of Peace be there, their Peace shall rest upon it; if not, it shall turn to them again.

Numb. 6. 27.

Mat. 5. 3. 4. Luke 24. 50, 51

Mat. 10. 12, 13. Luke 10. 5. 6.

The ancient Church to this end used particular Benedictions in Confirmation, Ordination, receiving Penitents, Matrimony, and to dying Persons; but all these the Corruption of Times hath transformed into reputed proper Sacraments: And those Blessings in Confirmation and Ordination are most Solemn, the former of which was granted even by S. *Hierome*, according to the custom of the Church all over the World, to be performed by the Bishop only. And in our Administration thereof, the serious renewing the Baptismal Covenant (which is a necessary duty of Christian Profession) is a good disposition for receiving the Blessing of God; and on this account Confirmation is not to be slighted, or wilfully neglected by those who have a high esteem for the Blessing of God.

Hier. adv. Luc.

3. They who receive this Ministry, are to guide the Church and Christian Society, that its Members may please God, not forfeit his Favour, or provoke his Displeasure. The most things contained under this head will respect those Ministers of the Church, who are the chief Governours there-

thereof; and the things eſtabliſhed by their conſent and agreement.

The Church of God is a moſt excellent Society, and his Miniſters are τῆς οἰκονόμοι, thoſe who are to have the care and ordering of this Family of God; and ſuch publick Worſhip as is ordered according to the Will of God being acceptable to him, it belongs to them to take care of the performance thereof; and alſo of eſtabliſhing Order and Decency; and the framing and executing ſuch Rules and Canons for Government and Diſcipline as are meet: And though the external Sanction of theſe things is well ordered by the Secular power; yet the directive part, and the ſpiritual Authority belongs to the Guides of the Church, who by the Goſpel are appointed therein Rulers and Preſidents: Hence Inferiours are required to obey them that are over them, and ſubmit themſelves; and *Titus* was ſent to *Crete*, to order the things that were wanting; and Biſhops in general ſtand charged by S. *Paul* and St. *Peter*, to take care of the Church of God. And as that is a requiſite to Order and due Reverence in Religious Worſhip; to them alſo belongs the ſetting apart, and conſecrating Places, for the publick Service of God.

Titus 1. 7.

περισάμενοι 1 Theſ. 5. 12. προϊστῶτες. 1 Tim. 5, 17. ἡγούμενοι Heb. 13. 7, 17. 24. Tit. 1. 5. 1 Tim. 3. 5. 1 Pet. 5. 2.

But becauſe there can be no ſecurity for Order, where every Officer may act independently at his own Pleaſure; therefore they have Authority to order Uniformity, which is in it ſelf deſirable, and ought to be obſerved, not only with reſpect to the ſecular Sanction; but together therewith, in compliance alſo with the Eccleſiaſtical Authority inveſted in Synods, which hath in all Ages from the Apoſtles, been honoured in the Chriſtian Church; of which the obſervation of the Canons of the ſeveral Councels and Codes, is an experimental Evidence. And as the mutual Conſent of Paſtors in Synods is according to natural Prudence, directly purſueth the great ends of Peace and Unity, and by their agreement addeth Weight to their Authority; ſo this Caſe is eminently included in that Promiſe of our Saviour, *Where two or three are gathered together in my*

Mat. 18. 20. *Name, there am I in the midſt of them.* And St. *Paul* himſelf yielded manifeſt Obedience both to the Decrees of the Council at *Jeruſalem*, Act. 15. And to that other Council, *Act.* 21. And ſo did S. *Peter* and S. *John* to another Council.

Act. 16. 4, 5. Act. 21. 18, 24, 26. Act. 8. 14.

And ſince Chriſtians being eſtabliſhed in the Truth, is of great uſe both to their own and the Churches Peace; in order hereunto the Paſtors of the Church in Councils have power to abandon Heretical and dangerous Doctrines, and to require ſubmiſſion to the Truth they declare. This was done in the Synod of the Apoſtles, againſt the neceſſity of Circumciſion; and in the four firſt general Councils, concerning the Doctrine of the Trinity, and the Perſon of the Mediator. And ſuch Deciſions concerning matters of Doctrine, when managed aright, have been deſervedly reverenced in the Church; ſince one end of God's appointing theſe Officers is, that we ſhould *be no more Children, toſſed to and fro with every wind of Doctrine.* And upon this account a particular Honour is due to the eſtabliſhed Doctrine of our Church, which hath a high agreement with the Rule of Scripture, and the Catholick and Primitive Church.

Eph. 4. 14.

Beſides theſe things, all particular Officers of the Church in their charge, are to watch over thoſe committed to them, as much as in them lies, with ſpecial regard to the Sick, and to thoſe alſo who need to be Catechiſed in the Principles of Religion, (it being our Saviour's firſt charge to S. *Peter* to feed his Lambs,) with earneſt Prayer for the Grace and Bleſſing of God upon them all.

John 21. 15.

4. The Miniſtry of Reconciliation includeth an Authority of rebuking and admoniſhng Offenders, of caſting them out of the Church, and of reſtoring them again upon Repentance. This hath been the ordinarily received ſenſe of thoſe great words of our Saviour, *Whatſoever ye ſhall bind on Earth, ſhall be bound in Heaven; and whatſoever ye ſhall looſe on Earth, ſhall be looſed in Heaven.* There is indeed a late Objection made, that theſe words ſpeak not of binding

Mat. 18. 18.

ing and looſing Perſons, but Things; and that it is uſual with the *Jewiſh* Writers to expreſs the binding and looſing of Things, not of Perſons; meaning thereby the declaring or judging ſuch things prohibited or allow'd. But beſides what may be otherwiſe ſaid, I think it ſufficient at preſent to obſerve, that the admitting this notion may well enough conſiſt with the true ſenſe of theſe words; which if interpreted by it, will import: 1. That the power of binding and looſing hath a conſiderable reſpect to ſuch things, as the Caſes, Offences, and Penitent Performances of perſons; and ſutably our Saviour after his Reſurrection gave his Apoſtles the authority of remitting and retaining Sins, which phraſe alſo immediately reſpecteth not Perſons but Things; but yet binding in this ſenſe muſt include an authoritative declaring the Practices of Men to be ſo far Evil, as to deprive the offending Perſons of their Chriſtian Priviledges. 2. Theſe words will alſo imply that the Officers of the Church are intruſted to bind and continue, or to looſe and diſcharge the obſervation of Penitential Rules; and accordingly the Apoſtle ſaith, to whom you forgive *any thing*, I forgive it alſo in the Perſon of Chriſt, 2 *Cor.* 2. 10.

And even this ſevere part of Eccleſiaſtical Power, is for Edification, not Deſtruction, both to the whole Church, and to the Offender, that through Repentance his Spirit may be ſaved in the day of the Lord; and ſo is properly included under the Miniſtry of Reconciliation. The general reſult of all I have ſaid, is, That the Office of the Miniſtry is of very high and great importance; and ſuch perſons who have a low eſteem thereof, if they have any reverence for their Saviour, let them ſeriouſly conſider, whether he who is Truth and Goodneſs, can be thought to uſe ſuch high expreſſions in this caſe, as to declare his giving them the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; and that what they bind on Earth ſhall be bound in Heaven, and ſuch like; to impoſe upon the World which he came to guide and ſave, and upon his Church which he ſo dearly

loves, with empty ſounds of great things, which ſignify little or nothing.

What a mighty ſenſe had the Primitive Chriſtians of this power of the Keys, when the Penitent Offenders under cenſure undertook, according to ſome Canons, the ſtrict obſervation of Penance, ſometimes for 20 or 30 years, and even to the end of their Life, that they might obtain Abſolution, andt he Peace of the Church, and its Communion: And under this ſevere Diſcipline, as *Tertullian* deſcribes it by the name of their *Exomologeſis*, they did ly in Sackcloth and Aſhes; they never uſed ſuch Cloaths or Diet as might appear pleaſant; they frequently exerciſed themſelves in Faſting, Prayers and Tears, crying to God day and night; and among other things, they made humble Supplication, even upon their Knees, unto the Members of the Church, and fell down proſtrate before its Officers; it being their cuſtom, *Presbyteris advolvi, & charis Dei adgenicularі.* And all this was done in the greateſt degree, while the Church was under perſecution from the Civil Power.

Conc. Ancyr. c. 16. Elib. c. 2, 7, 47, 63. Valent. cap. 3.

de Pœnit. c. 9.

But that which they apprehended, and which I doubt not to be true, is, that, as *Chemnitius* expreſſeth it, *Chriſtus eſt qui per miniſterium abſolvit, & peccata remittit*; it is Chriſt who gives Abſolution by his Miniſtry, *viz.* where they proceed according to his Will. And, as under the Law, he who treſpaſſed, beſide the amendment of his fault, and reſtitution, either in things Sacred or Civil, was to have recourſe to the Treſpaſs-Offering, for obtaining the Mercy of God; even ſo under the Goſpel, he who performs the other conditions of Chriſtianity, ought, where it may be had, to apply himſelf alſo to the Miniſterial power of remitting Sin; and the receiving this Teſtimony, together with that of a good Conſcience, upon a Chriſtian Penitent Deportment, is, next to the great Abſolution by Chriſt, the greateſt encouragement for Peace and Comfort.

Exam. Conc. Trid. de Pœni.

Only

Only I must here add, which I desire may be particularly observed, that the principal way of ministerial dispensing Remission of Sins, and other Blessings of the Gospel, to them who fall not under gross enormities, and the censures of the Church (though performed also in its degree in Doctrine, and other Benedictions and Absolutions) is chiefly done by Administring the Holy Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper to persons duly qualified. And it is one of the miscarriages of the *Roman* Church, that they take too little notice of this advantage in receiving the Holy *Eucharist*, and do inordinately advance their Sacrament of Penance so far into its place, as to be esteemed the only Sacrament after Baptism, wherein may be obtained remission of Sins.

Wherefore I conceive, that as that Man who being converted to Christianity, doth profess the Doctrine, and embrace the practice thereof in other things, but wholly omitteth Christian Baptism, doth thereby deprive himself of the ordinary visible Testimony of God's favour, and runs himself upon the needless hazard, of hoping to find acceptance by extraordinary Grace, in the neglect of the ordinary means thereof: even so is it with those adult persons, who being otherwise piously disposed, do ordinarily neglect the attendance upon the Lord's Supper, which is particularly appointed of God, to be a means of conveying and applying the benefits of Christ's Holy Sacrifice, for remission of Sins, and other blessings of the Covenant, to them who are worthy and meet to receive the same. And if this, which to me seemeth a great Truth, was duly heeded, the frequent attendance upon the Holy Communion, and other Services of God, would be, as it was in the Primitive Times, generally looked on as a Duty of very great importance, in Persons adult, and resolving upon a true Christian course of life.

Having asserted the nature and excellency of the Ministerial Power; it will be necessary also to disclaim and reject from it these two things.

1. That

1. That the Miniſtry of Reconciliation is not appointed to offer in the Maſs a Propitiatory Sacrifice to God for the Quick and the Dead; and herewith muſt be rejected alſo the Power of effecting Tranſubſtantiation. St. *Chryſoſtom* truly aſſerteth, That it is not the ſame thing which is done by Chriſt, (*i. e.* in reconciling us by his Sacrifice,) and by his Miniſtry. But the Prieſtly Authority, according to the Romiſh Ordination, is chiefly placed in this proper Power of Sacrificing, their Form being, *Accipe poteſtatem offerre Sacrificium Deo*, &c. And all the Orders of their Miniſtry have ſome proper thing appointed for them, which relateth to this Sacrifice of the Maſs. That is properly *Ordo*, ſaith *F. Layman*, where there is *gradus poteſtatis ad peragendum Miſſæ Sacrificium*, or a degree of Power to perform ſomething about the Sacrifice of the Maſs. Much to the ſame purpoſe is in many other Writers, and even in the Roman Catechiſm *ad Parochos*, in which, as alſo in the Council of *Trent* it ſelf, their Prieſthood is reckoned as the higheſt of their ſeven Orders, partly upon this account, and partly becauſe this Notion ſerveth further to advance the Dignity and Eminency of the Pope. But there is no ſuch Sacrifice of the Maſs in the Religion of our Saviour. Indeed here it muſt be granted and aſſerted, that the Elements for the Communion were uſually offered to God to be ſet apart for a ſacred Uſe; and that all Chriſtian Worſhip being in a large ſence the offering ſpiritual Sacrifices to God, ſo is eſpecially the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, becauſe therein is eminently a Commemoration of the only Sacrifice of Chriſt, with a peculiar Addreſs unto God thereby, and it, and the Benefits thereof, are myſtically repreſented and exhibited therein. And in this ſence it is ordinarily called a Sacrifice, and a commemorating Sacrifice, in ancient Writers and Liturgies.

Chryſoſt. in 2 Cor. 2. 5.

Pontif. Rom.

Th. Mor. l. 5. Tr. 9. c. 1.

Cat. ad Par. de Ord. Sacr. Concil. Trid. Seſſ. 23. cap. 2.

But the Romiſh Church not ſatisfied herewith, in the *Trent*-Aſſembly thundreth an Anathema againſt them who deny their Maſs to be *verum & proprium Sacrificium*, a true and proper Sacrifice, and to be a Propitiatory Sacrifice for the

Concil. Trid. Seſſ. 22. Can. 1, 3.

the Quick and the Dead, for Sins, Puniſhments, *&c.* And they aſſert, that the Elements being properly tranſubſtantiated, Chriſt doth in this ſence yield himſelf to be ſacrificed, *per Sacerdotes ſub ſignis immolandum*; and that this is as compleatly a Sacrifice for Sin, as that he himſelf once offered, and the very ſame, *ſolâ offerendi ratione diverſa.* And *Bellarmine* dares to ſay of this Sacrifice of the Maſs, *Mundum Deo reconciliat*, it reconciles the World to God. Ibid. cap. 1, 2. *Bellarm.* in Expoſ. Doctr. Chriſt. de Pœnitent.

But this their Sacrifice is contrary to the Doctrine of the Scripture, and derogatory to the Honour of Chriſt's Oblation, in that it was the Excellency of his Sacrifice above the Aaronical Ones, that there is no place for the daily Offering and Repetition thereof, ſince by one Offering once made, he hath perfectly accompliſhed the End of Sacrificing, as the Apoſtle largely aſſerteth, nor can he die any more. Heb. 7. 27. Chap. 10. 10, 11, 12, 14. 18. Chap. 9. 25, 26, 28.

And their Tranſubſtantiation, on which this is founded, carrieth ſo plain Contradictions to the Evidence of Senſe, the Principles of Reaſon, and the plain Aſſertions of Scripture, and is attended with ſuch numerous and palpable Abſurdities, that the general Belief of ſuch a thing by thoſe of the Romiſh Communion, may be placed among the chief Miracles really wrought in that Church.

And the Sacrifice of Chriſt was on this account expiatory, in that by the Satisfaction he made to his Father, he ſo far appeaſed his Wrath, and procured his Favour towards Man, as to obtain the Terms, Grace, and Bleſſings of the New Covenant. Wherefore if the very ſame Sacrifice be really offered in every Maſs, it muſt be to the ſame end, and then not only the Redemption of Man muſt be there made, but the original Sanction of the Goſpel-Covenant muſt be then, and not before eſtabliſhed.

Beſides this, as the High-Prieſt, who offered the Expiatory Sacrifice under the Law, muſt enter with the Blood thereof into the Holy of Holies: So the Apoſtle acquaints us, that Chriſt, who is an High-Prieſt, and an High-Prieſt after the Order of *Melchiſedec*, offering himſelf as an Expiation for Sin, muſt by his Blood enter into the holy Place

not

not made with hands, even into Heaven it ſelf. Wherefore no Man can undertake properly to offer this Sacrifice, but ſuch an High-Prieſt, who with the Blood thereof doth enter into Heaven it ſelf, and not ſtill abide upon Earth.

Heb 9.11,12, 23,24

2. We muſt reject all Power of reconciling any adult Perſons unto God, who do not perform the other Conditions of the Goſpel-Covenant. If *Simon Magus* receive Baptiſm in Hypocriſy, he doth not receive Remiſſion of Sins, but is in the Bond of Iniquity; and the Devil may enter into him who taketh the holy Communion unworthily, as he entred into *Judas*. He that comes to receive Reconciliation without pious care of ſerious Repentance, is as the Man under the Law, who came to be purified, but brings an unclean thing with him before the Lord, which is a kind of bidding Defiance to the Holineſs of God, and the Purity of his Worſhip.

Now the Church of *England* declares in her Liturgy, that Chriſt hath left a Power to his Church to abſolve all Sinners who truly repent, and believe in him: And that he is the merciful Receiver of all true penitent Sinners, and moſt willing to pardon us, if we come unto him with faithful Repentance, if we will ſubmit our ſelves to him, and from henceforth walk in his Ways; with much more to that purpoſe.

But in the Romiſh Church, where they make ſuch a diſtinction between Contrition and Attrition, as that the latter is an imperfect Grief, which doth not include the Love of God above all, nor doth always take in with it a Deteſtation of Sin, as the former doth; their Doctors, out of a ſtrange Looſeneſs of Principles, aſſert, the Duty of Contrition very rarely to oblige any Man. And even the Council of *Trent* favoureth that Poſition, That Attrition, with the Sacrament of Penance and Abſolution, is ſufficient to pleaſe God; concerning which the Generality of their Authors ſpeak much more plain, and many of them urge the Authority of this Council.

Seſſ. 14. cap. 4.

This

This is called by *Valentia*, *receptiſſimum Axioma*, a moſt received Maxim; and tho there are ſome Doctors, who require Contrition as needful with that Sacrament, he ſaith, this is *Sententia vix tolerabilis*, an Aſſertion that may hardly be tolerated. *Filiucius*, who was Profeſſor in the Jeſuits College at *Rome*, and the Pope's Penitentiary, aſſerteth, *Ex vi juſtitiæ ad Deum, &c.* That upon account of doing what in Juſtice we owe to God, he that hath Attrition with the Sacrament, is not bound in Duty to be contrite, no, not in the hour of Death. Indeed he there ſaith, that upon account of Charity to God or themſelves, Men may be bound to be contrite, *viz.* if they would ſecure themſelves, tho they ſhould miſs the Sacrament of Penance, or would do more for God than he requireth. But in another place he tells us, That enough is done to ſatisfy the Duty of Repentance, by Attrition with the Sacrament. And *Canus* aſſerteth, *Deus nihil amplius exigit:* God requires no more, than either Contrition without the Sacrament, or Attrition with the Sacrament. To the ſame purpoſe alſo ſpeaketh *Becanus*; and *Greg. de Valentia* denieth it to be needful with the Sacrament, to have any ſuch Diſpoſition which is *putata Contritio*, or which they ſuppoſe to be Contrition.

Greg. de Val. Tom. 4. Diſp. 7. Qu. 8. Punct. 3.

Filiuc. Tr. 6. c. 8. n. 197.

Filiuc. Tr. 7. c. 6. n. 14.

M. Canus de Pœnit. Relect. 4.

Becan. Schol. Th. part. 3. c. 35. qu. 6.

But is this a Doctrine ſuitable to the Purity of God, and the holy Jeſus, that Men may all their Life-time be ſo like to Devils, as not to have any ſingle Act of Hatred againſt Sin, or of Love of God above all things, and yet by a few Words of the Prieſt, as ſtrange a thing as the Power of Tranſubſtantiating, be transformed into Saints, but without any real Holineſs at all? Is this a Repreſentation of Religion like that made in the Scripture, *The Doctrine according to Godlineſs*, which requires *the doing the Will of our Father which is in Heaven*, and declares, *that without Holineſs no Man ſhall ſee God?* Or is this like the Primitive Spirit of Chriſtianity, where ſerious diligence in the Exerciſes of Contrition and Piety, was thought requiſite for receiving Abſolution?

Shall theſe Men be accounted the Patrons of Good Works, who againſt the Doctrine of St. *James* aſſert, that Men may be ſaved without Works, or any holy Action? and who run up to the higheſt and moſt abſurd Poſitions of Solifidianiſm, even the Belief of the Non-neceſſity of holy Actions and Diſpoſitions? They have found a way, if it be a ſafe one, how Works of Iniquity, tho they ſtand condemned by our Saviour, may have an entrance into Heaven without true Converſion. But ſuch will find, that, as *Tertullian* ſpake in a like Caſe, *Salvâ veniâ in Gehennam detrudentur*; notwithſtanding their Pardon, they will be caſt down to Hell: *For if we ſay we have fellowſhip with him, and walk in Darkneſs, we lie, and do not the Truth.* Theſe Doctrines of *Rome* are fit for the Synagogue of Satan, but no ſuch unclean thing may enter into the Congregation of the Lord. But whomſoever they follow, let us follow St. *Peter*, *to be diligent, that we may be found of him in Peace, without ſpot, and blameleſs.*

De Pœn. c. 5.

I now come to diſcourſe of the Perſons to whom this Miniſtration is committed, which I ſhall ſpeak to in a fourfold Conſideration.

1. To us, the Officers of the Goſpel-Diſpenſation, not to the falſe Apoſtles, nor yet to the Jewiſh Prieſthood. The Miniſtry of the New Teſtament excelleth that of the Old, even as the New Covenant, and the Grace of the Goſpel goeth beyond the Law, as the Apoſtle diſcourſeth largely, in the third Chapter of this ſecond Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*. The Legal Diſpenſation in general was a Diſpenſation of Condemnation, which pronounced a Curſe upon Offenders, but gave not Power and Grace to perform Obedience; and the external Obſervations therein enjoined were a heavy Yoke: And that Acceptance which holy Men had with God under the Law, was not from the particular Jewiſh Covenant, as ſuch, but chiefly from the Terms of Grace declared to *Abraham*, who is called the Father of the Circumciſion, to them who are not

not of the Circumcision only, but who walk in the Steps of the Faith of *Abraham*. Rom. 4. 11.

Indeed they had then Sacrifices for Sin, and a Way of Atonement; but these things, as they were strictly legal, did only tend to obtain the Favour of God, that the Offenders should not be cut off, or be exposed to Temporal Judgments: But *it was not possible that the Blood of Bulls and Goats should purge away Sins*, the Guilt of which their repeated Oblations did declare to continue. And the Reverence to God, and Obedience, was in these Observations chiefly valuable.

But these Sacrifices, as they fell under a more large Consideration, were also Evidences of the Mercy of God in receiving Sinners, and were Testimonies of God's particular Favour, in being willing to bless that People, if they would hear his Voice, and obey him; and did also adumbrate the Grace of the New Testament, which the Apostle tells us was witnessed by the Law and the Prophets. Rom. 3. 21.

But the Gospel-Ministration declareth Christ by his Mediation to have actually obtained and effected a compleat Way of Reconciliation, and confirmed that Covenant which is established upon better Promises, and is properly and eminently the Ministration of Righteousness, proposing most excellent Blessings, with a sure and plain way to obtain them, and affording such Assistances as are needful. And this Gospel-Reconciliation is so committed to the Ministry, that they ministerially dispense the Blessings thereof, by declaring its Doctrine, by Benedictions and Absolutions, and by dispensing the Sacramental Symbols of Divine Grace.

2. To us, with primary respect to St. *Paul*, who wrote this Epistle, and the other Apostles. They were in a peculiar manner intrusted with the Ministry of Reconciliation, for they were the chief Witnesses of Christ's Resurrection, and the principal Testifiers of the Christian Faith, and received their Doctrine and Office immediatly from Christ. They were the Foundations, next to Christ himself, of the

Christian Church, and the infallible Guides thereof, and were furnished with singular Assistances, and the Power of the Holy-Ghost. And the Extent of their Authority was in some parts thereof unconfined and unlimited; even St. *Paul* saith, he received Grace and Apostleship for Obedience
Rom. 1. 5. to the Faith, among all Nations, including *Rome* also, divers Years after St. *Peter* was said to be Bishop there.

The Apostles were the highest Officers of the *Christian*
1 Cor. 12. 28. *Church*, under Christ himself; and the Scriptures tell us,
Eph. 4. 11. God set therein first Apostles, and therefore none above them. Indeed St. *Peter*, whom we highly honour as an eminent Apostle, had a kind of Primacy of Order yielded to him, but with no design to depress the other Apostles, above whom he had no distinction of Office. The Power of binding and loosing promised to St. *Peter*, Mat. 16. 19. was on like manner given to them all, *Mat.* 18. 18. And that ample Commission, *John* 20. 21, 23. *As my Father sent me, so send I you: Whose soever Sins ye remit*, &c. doth give them all an equal Authority. And tho St. *Paul* was last called, we read that St. *Peter* gave to him the right-hand of Fellowship; and in two several places of this second
Gal. 2. 9. Epistle to the *Corinthians*, the Holy-Ghost tells us he was
2 Cor. 11. 5. Chap. 12. 11. in nothing behind the very chiefest Apostles. And tho there are many Privileges and Prerogatives reckoned up to St. *Peter*, in which Subject many Romish Writers are very diligent; the Prerogatives of St. *Paul*, upon due consideration, will either equal them, or not be much inferior to them. It was *St. Paul*, not *St. Peter*, who was taken up into the third Heaven, who saw our Saviour after his Ascension into Glory, who laboured more abundantly than they all, who was miraculously called, and was in a peculiar manner *the Apostle of the Gentiles*, and who wrote a much greater part of the New Testament than any other of the Apostles did.

And for that late Notion, That the Power of the Keys was given only to *St. Peter*, in that he was appointed by Christ, singly to declare the Gospel first to the Gentiles:

both

both this confined ſenſe of the Power of the Keys, and of its being peculiar to S. *Peter*, is againſt the ſenſe of Antiquity; and alſo that which is particularly inſiſted on is a miſtake. For though God by a Viſion directed St. *Peter* to open the Door to the Gentiles; yet all the Apoſtles had before that time the Commiſſion which he firſt made uſe of, to go and teach all Nations, and Preach the Goſpel to every Creature: So that this was not a ſingular Authority committed to St. *Peter*; but he was firſt made choice of to have a right underſtanding of the extent of his Commiſſion. And it is not to be doubted, but that Authority which did belong to all the Apoſtles, of leading Men to the Church, receiving them into it, governing them in it, and excluding them from it, doth contain the chief part of the power of the Keys. Mat. 28. 19. Mar. 16. 16.

3. To us, not only to the Apoſtles, but even to other Officers of the Church, as Biſhops and Prieſts or Presbyters, is given this Miniſtry of Reconciliation: for if we conſider the nature of this Office, the Miniſtry of Reconciliation, or which is all one, the Miniſtry of the Goſpel muſt not ceaſe, till the end of it in the Salvation of Men be accompliſhed. And our Saviour both promiſeth his Preſence and Authority to be with his Miniſtry unto the end of the World; and eſtabliſheth them in his Church till we all come in the Unity of the Faith, and Knowledg of the Son of God unto a perfect Man. Mat. 28. 20. Eph. 4. 14.

And we may further obſerve, That in writing this ſecond Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*; it is manifeſt from the Inſcription thereof, that *Timothy* therein joined with S. *Paul*. Now, though he was no Apoſtle, nor a Companion of St. *Paul* till after the Council of *Jeruſalem*, as appears from the Hiſtory of the *Acts*; yet he here, as well as St. *Paul*, hath a ſhare in the Miniſtry of Reconciliation.

That *Timothy* was the firſt Biſhop of *Epheſus*, is generally declared by the Ancient Writers. *Euſebius* atteſteth it; and beſides others, this was expreſſed by *Leontius* in the great Euſ. Hiſt. l. 3. c. 4.

Conc. Chalc. Action. 11.

great Council of *Chalcedon*; there being then preſerved an exact Record and Catalogue of the Biſhops of that Church. And though Learned Men herein diſagree, and there is manifeſt difficulty in fixing the Chronology; it is greatly probable, from comparing the Epiſtles to *Timothy* with the Hiſtory of the *Acts*, that he was not yet made Biſhop of *Epheſus*, when this Epiſtle to the *Corinthians* was written: And this might then give ſome fair probability from the inſtance of *Timothy*, that that Order of Prieſt or Presbyter, as diſtinct from a Biſhop, was of an Apoſtolical, and therefore a Divine Original. But becauſe ſeveral difficulties, too large to be here diſcuſſed, muſt be obviated for the clearing this particular; I ſhall rather fix upon another Conſideration, which may be ſufficient to perſwade the ſame.

It is very evident from the Hiſtory of the *Acts*, and ſome expreſſions in the Epiſtles; that for ſeveral years after the famous Church of *Epheſus* was founded by St. *Paul*, *Timothy* the firſt Biſhop there, was uſually with St. *Paul* in his Journeys, or by his Command in other places. Now it may be acknowledged, that the chief Government and power of Cenſure in ſeveral Churches, was for ſome time reſerved in the hands of the Apoſtles themſelves, though at a diſtance, as is evident from the Epiſtles to the *Corinthians*, it was concerning the Church of *Corinth*. But he who ſhall think that in all this time they had no Church-Officer fixed amongſt them in that great Church of *Epheſus*, to adminiſter the Holy Communion, and celebrate other needful Miniſterial Performances, muſt account the Apoſtles to have had no great care of the Churches they planted, nor the Churches to have had any great zeal for the Religion they embraced, which no Man can judg, who hath any knowledg of the Spirit of that Primitive Chriſtianity. But if they had in the Church of *Epheſus*, other fixed Officers diſtinct from the Biſhop, to celebrate the Holy Communion, and other neceſſary acts of ordinary Miniſtration, then muſt the Order of Presbyters be of as early

early original in the Church, as the Hiſtory of the *Acts*; and then the ordaining Elders in every Church, muſt take in thoſe who are diſtinctly called Prieſts or Presbyters.

To this I add, that the Office of Presbyter includeth an Authority to tender in God's Name remiſſion of Sins, and as from him to exhibit to his Church the Sacramental Symbols of his Grace; and upon that account no ſuch Office could ever have its Original from any lower than Apoſtolical and Divine Authority.

4. To us, in different Ranks and Orders in the Church, not in a parity and equality. Here is S. *Paul* an Apoſtle, and *Timothy* in an Order inferiour to him. When Chriſt was upon Earth, he appointed the Apoſtles, and the Seventy; and when he Aſcended, he gave ſome Apoſtles, ſome Prophets, ſome Evangeliſts, ſome Paſtors and Teachers. And though moſt of theſe were Officers by an extraordinary Commiſſion, which are ceaſed; yet when *Timothy* was fixed at *Epheſus*, where there then were Presbyters, as I have ſhewed, the chief power of Government, and the care of Ordination was intruſted in his hands ſingly, as is manifeſt, and hath been oft obſerved from the Epiſtles to *Timothy*. The like appears concerning *Titus*; as alſo that the chief care of the Churches of *Aſia*, was in the hands of the Angels of thoſe Churches.

If we conſult the Ancient ſtate of the Church, this chief Government in a ſingle Perſon or Biſhop, in thoſe ancient times, took place as far as Chriſtianity it ſelf reached. Beſides what may be ſaid from particular Writers, the firſt General Council of *Nice*, and the more ancient Code called the Canons of the Apoſtles, do both of them not only frequently mention, as diſtinct Offices, the Biſhop, Presbyter, and Deacon; but alſo expreſs this diſtinction between Biſhop, and Preſbyter. 1. That the peculiar power of Ordaining doth reſide in the Biſhop. 2. That he receiveth his Epiſcopal Office by a ſpecial Ordination thereto. 3. That he hath a particular power of governing and cenſuring the

1 Can. Ap. 2. Can. Nic. 19.

2 Can. Ap. 1. Can: Nic. 4.

3 Can. Ap. 15, 31, 32, 38. Conc. Nic. c. 5.

the Laiety, and other Clergy. And he who ſhall conſider that many things in the Scripture may receive conſiderable Light, from underſtanding the cuſtom of the *Jews*, and even of the *Gentiles*, muſt needs acknowledg that an account of the practice and cuſtoms of the Chriſtian Church, may lead us to the true ſenſe of thoſe expreſſions of Scripture which have relation thereto; eſpecially, ſince no Man without this help can give a ſatisfactory account of the diſtinct work and buſineſs of thoſe ordinary Church-Officers, which are particularly mentioned in Scripture: Wherefore I doubt not but according to the Scripture, and the Univerſal practice of the ancient Church throughout the World; the power of the Keys, and of remitting and retaining Sins, which takes in the whole Office of the Miniſtry, is in ſome eminent parts of it wholly reſerved to Biſhops, while other parts thereof are diſpenſed by Prieſts, and ſome by Deacons; yet ſo, that theſe ever acted with ſubmiſſion to the Biſhop, as is aſſerted by *Ignatius* and *Tertullian*.

Ignat. ad Smyr.
Tert. de Bapt. c. 17.

I ſhall only here further obſerve, that in the very beginning of Chriſtianity, the diſtinction of the Officers of the Chriſtian Church was owned and acknowledged to be correſpondent and parallel to the diſtinction of the Officers of the *Jewiſh* Temple-Service, the obſerving of which ſeemeth of conſiderable moment in this caſe. Even St. *Hierome* declares, That what place *Aaron*, his Sons and the *Levites* had in the Temple, the ſame have the Biſhops, Prieſts and Deacons in the Church. It is related concerning St. *James*, the firſt Biſhop of *Jeruſalem*, by *Epiphanius* out of *Clemens*, that he did wear the πέταλον, (which is in the Septuagint, the Plate upon the high Prieſt's Mitre, on which was engraven, *Holineſs to the Lord*,) and he, as alſo S. *Hierome*, and *Euſebius* from *Egeſippus*, relate, that to him only it was lawful to enter into the Holy of Holies. Now all theſe Chriſtian Writers, with others who uſe ſomewhat like expreſſions, as *Polycrates* concerning St. *John*, muſt never be thought to conſpire together to impoſe Fables upon the after-Ages. Nor could they be ſo much wanting in the knowledge of

Hieron. ad Evagr.
Epiph. Hær. 29. & 78.
Hieronym. de ſcrip. Eccleſ. in Jacobo.
Euſ. Hiſt. Eccl. l. 2. c. 23 gr.

of Christianity, as to imagine that these great Officers of the Christian Church, were *Jewish* High Priests, and ministred in their Temple-Service; but the sense of these expressions, though they may seem at first view obscure, is, that S. *James* was acknowledged to have a like eminency of Office above others in the Christian Church of *Jerusalem*, as the *Jewish* High-Priest had above other Priests in the *Jewish* Church. And *Nazianzen* expresseth his being ordained Bishop by these and other like words: saith he, 'Thou anointedst me an High-Priest, and broughtst me to 'the Altar of the Spiritual Burnt-Offering, sacrificedst the 'Calf of Initiation, and madest me view the Holy of Holies. Which words evidence, that the Christian Bishop, by an Allegorical Allusion, was described by words primarily relating to the *Jewish* High-Priest, because of a Parallel eminency in each of them. Naz. Or. 5.

Now this Observation shews the distinction of these Officers of the Christian Church, from the very beginning thereof, St. *James* being ordained Bishop of *Jerusalem* very soon after our Saviour's Ascension. And this will further evidence, that as the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and the *Jewish* Writers frequently mention the Officers of the Temple-Service, only by the names of *Priests* and *Levites*, including therein the High-Priest, whose Office was distinct from the other Priests; so it is no prejudice to the like distinction of Offices under the New Testament, that in the Scriptures and some other ancient Writers, the Officers above Deacons are sometimes expressed by the name of Bishops, sometime of Elders, Priests or Presbyters; whilst yet we have very plain Testimony of the singular eminency of one, who hath since been peculiarly called the Bishop. Euseb. Hist. l. 2. c. 1. Hieron. de script. Eccles.

I come now to the last thing to be discoursed of, the Divine Authority by which this Ministry is established. God in Christ hath given to us the Ministry of Reconciliation; and this speaketh three things.

1. The true Original of this Function. God the Father gave the Miniſtry of Reconciliation; our Lord ſent his Apoſtles, as his Father ſent him; and the Holy Ghoſt made the Elders of *Epheſus* to be Overſeers of the Flock. And here not only St. *Paul*, who was called immediately, but *Timothy* alſo (even as thoſe other Elders of *Epheſus*,) being called by Men, whom God made chief Officers in his Church, received this Miniſtry by Divine Authority; and therefore the Adminiſtrations thereof are performed in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt.

This therefore is ſuch a Sanction, as every Perſon upon Earth ought to reverence; and whoſoever either deſpiſe or oppoſe this Miniſtry, had need ſeriouſly and timely to conſider whoſe Authority they undertake to affront. When our Saviour appointed the Twelve Apoſtles, and afterwards the Seventy, he bids them both to ſhake off the Duſt of their Feet againſt that City that ſhould not receive them; and tells them it ſhall be more tolerable for *Sodom* in that day, than for that City; and declares further even to the Seventy, who were then of the loweſt rank of them whom he ſent: *he that deſpiſeth you, deſpiſeth me; and he that deſpiſeth me, deſpiſeth him that ſent me.*

Mat. 10. 15. Luke 10. 12.

Luke 10. 16.

But for all thoſe who are employed about God's Work, and are warranted by his Authority; if they be faithful in his Service, they ſhall be here under his Care, and hereafter partakers of his Reward. St. *Peter* acquaints us, that when the chief Shepherd ſhall appear, they ſhall receive *a Crown of Glory that fadeth not away*; and St. *John* aſſures us, *That our Lord himſelf holdeth the ſeven Stars, or the Angels of the ſeven Churches in his right hand.*

1 Pet. 5. 4.

Rev. 1. 16, 20. ch. 2. 1.

2. This ſpeaks alſo the Excellency of this Miniſtry. As it is from God, it is properly and eminently a Gift of God, even a Gift of that high Nature, that when Chriſt in his glorious Exaltation received Gifts for Men, he then gave ſome Paſtors and Teachers, and as Head of his Church, eſtabliſhed

Eph. 4. 11.

ſtabliſhed this fixed Miniſtry. And if we conſider it as it reſpects Men, the moſt excellent Deſigns are thereby purſued, to wit, the promoting among Men the Glory of God, and the Kingdom and Government of Jeſus Chriſt; and the conducting Men into the Ways of God, and thereby unto Peace and Reconciliation with him, and to everlaſting Happineſs. Hereupon they who ſerve God in this Office, are owned to be θεοῦ συνεργοὶ, Fellow-workers with God himſelf, as under God, carrying on the great Deſign of God and his Goodneſs in the World. And this ſpeaks it an Inſtitution of great Value, Worth, and Honour. 1 Cor. 3. 9. 2 Cor. 6. 1.

And as I above noted this Miniſtry to excell the Jewiſh Prieſthood, which yet was very excellent; ſo St. *Chryſoſtom* obſerves, That God hath given this high Honour thereto, which he hath not given to the holy Angels and Archangels themſelves, to be Miniſters of Reconciliation, and to diſpenſe in his Name the Pledges of his Grace and Favour unto the Members of his Church. Chryſoſt. de Sacerdot. l. 3. c. 5.

3. This ſheweth that no Man may take this Honour unto himſelf, but he that entreth into any Order of this Miniſtry, muſt do it in that way which God appointeth. The Apoſtles were conſtituted and commiſſionated immediatly by Chriſt himſelf; and as he committed the general Care of his Church to them, he therewith endued them with a Power to ordain others, which is a chief part of that Care, and of great concernment for the preſent and future Good of the Church.

The Aſſiſtants of the Apoſtles, and the firſt Biſhops and other Officers of the ſeveral Churches, were ordained by ſome one or more of the Apoſtles, or of thoſe Apoſtolical Men who received Ordination from them. The ancient Teſtimonies of the Fathers aſſure us, that *Clemens* was ordained by St. *Peter*, and *Polycarp* by St. *John*. The Scriptures acquaint us, that the ſeven Deacons were conſtituted by the twelve Apoſtles; and where *Paul* and *Barnabas* came, they ordained Elders in every Church. And *Euſebius* declares, as a Matter of certain Truth, that St. *John* in Tert. de Præſc. c. 32. Iren. l. 3. c. 3. Euſ. Hiſt. Eccl. l. 3. c. 35. gr. Acts 6. 3, 6. Acts 14. 23. Euſ. Hiſt. l. 3. c. 23. gr.

his old Age, in ſome places made Biſhops, and in others planted whole Churches.

After the Apoſtles had committed particular Churches to the Care of their Biſhops or Metropolitans, they alſo intruſted the Power of Ordination peculiarly in their hands, which indeed is included in committing to them the chief Care of the Church. To this purpoſe *Titus* was appointed to ordain Elders in every City of *Crete*; and *Timothy* directed how he ought to behave himſelf in the Church of God, concerning the Ordination of its Officers. And from theſe Principles, the Truth of what *Clemens Romanus* declareth may be eaſily inferred, That the Apoſtles ordered that when thoſe chief Officers of the Church, whom they had appointed, ſhould die, ἕτεροι διαδέξωνται τὴν λειτουργίαν αὐτῶν, others in their places ſhould ſucceed them in the ſame Office and Miniſtration, and therefore with a Power of Ordination.

Titus 1. 5. 1 Tim. 3. 1--- 14, 15.

Epiſt. ad Cor. p. 57.

And the univerſal Conſent of genuine Antiquity, ſhews the ancient *Church* to have received and followed that Platform and Model which was framed by the Apoſtles, for Epiſcopal Eminency in Government, and Power in Ordination. To this purpoſe both *Tertullian* and *Irenæus* urge this, as a convictive Argument againſt the later Brood of Hereſies, That the *Catholick Church* could produce ſuch a Catalogue of their Biſhops, and the Succeſſion of them, which would manifeſt that the firſt of them who was fixed in their ſeveral *Churches*, was there placed by the Apoſtles themſelves, or by Apoſtolical Men their Aſſiſtants. And the Succeſſion in divers chief *Churches* is ſtill preſerved in ancient Writers, and Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtorians. And that the Power of Ordination eſpecially was peculiar to the Biſhop, beſides the Teſtimony of ancient *Canons*, and Practice, is acknowledged even by St. *Hierom*. And the placing of this Power in a ſingle Perſon was of great neceſſity and uſefulneſs, for preſerving the *Churches* Peace and Unity.

Tert. de Præſ. c. 32. Iren. adv. Hær. l. 3, c. 3.

Hieron. ad Evagr. 1

From hence I conclude, that Epiſcopal Ordination was, according to the *Conſtitution* of the Apoſtles, and conſtant Practice

Practice of the *Ancient Church*, the only regular way of entring into this Office and Miniſtry of Reconciliation: and he that knows how eaſy a thing it is to raiſe plauſible Objections almoſt againſt any thing, will not be much moved by ſuch as ſome produce in this caſe, againſt ſo plain Evidence and general Teſtimony.

Indeed there have been ſome, and but ſome Proteſtant Foreign *Churches*, (not the *Bohemian*, as ſome Engliſh Writers have unfaithfully miſrepreſented it, nor thoſe of *Sueden*, and the *Daniſh* Dominions, nor divers others in *Germany*,) who have been without this Epiſcopal Ordination; and it muſt be ſaid, that in this particular, which is a matter of moment, they are defective in that Primitive Apoſtolical Order which we obſerve. But in the firſt fixing theſe *Churches*, and their Miniſtry, all things ſeem not to have been done as they would have choſen, but as their preſent Circumſtances would give them leave, while they wanted that Privilege which our Reformation enjoyed, the Conſent of the *Civil* and *Eccleſiaſtical* Governors. For beſides the Expreſſions of particular Writers, the *French* Proteſtants, in their *General Confeſſion*, concerning the Entrance into the Miniſtry, pleaded a Neceſſity in their Reformation, of having ſome things done *extra ordinem*, out of the regular Way, with reſpect to the making up the Ruines and Decays of the Church. Confeſ. Gallic. c. 31.

Yea, thoſe Churches themſelves, and the moſt worthy Men among them, are no Oppoſers, but Approvers of this Government and Order, as hath been ſufficiently ſhewed concerning many principal Perſons among them. And even in the Synod of *Dort*, when thoſe ſent from *England* aſſerted Epiſcopacy as Apoſtolical, there was not (as they declared in their joint Atteſtation) any one Perſon in that Synod, who ſpake a Word againſt it; yea, as Biſhop *Hall* acquaints us, the Preſident of the Synod ſaid, *Domine, non licet nobis eſſe tam felices:* We may not be ſuch happy Men. Divine Right of Epiſcopacy, part 1. c. 4.

Now

Now I conceive, it becomes private Persons not to be over forward in judging other *Churches*, but to expres as much Charity towards them as the case will bear; but to shew no such respect to any, as to neglect a due Reverence to whatsoever is of God. Wherefore I shall only note three things in general.

1. That it is indeed a Truth, that some positive Precepts may in extraordinary cases be dispensed with by the Goodness of God, who will have Mercy, and not Sacrifice. This was that which warranted *David*'s Men in eating the Shew-Bread. In this case Circumcision was forborn in the Wilderness; and the *Jewish* Casuists thought that Precept not to oblige, when the circumcising an Infant was inevitably like to procure his Death. The sacrificing in another place than that which God had singly appointed, was practised by *Samuel*, as well as others, after the Destruction of *Shiloh*, and before the Building of the Temple; and by *Elijah*, under the general Defection of *Israel*. The celebrating Baptism by Persons unordained, was allowed in the ancient Churth, *si necessitas cogit*, as St. *Hierom* phraseth it. And the Command that all the Males of *Israel* should three times in the Year appear before the Lord, doth yet by the Letter of the Scripture give allowance to him who was in a Journey, and by the reasonable Interpretation of the Jewish Writers, the same Liberty was to be extended to those in Childhood and Infancy, (as *Samuel* was) and to those in Sickness, Old-Age, and such like.

Hor. Hebr. in 1 Cor. 7. 19.

Hieron. adv. Lucif.

1 Sam. 1. 21. V. Seld. de Syn. l. 1. c. 7. p. 186, 187.

2. Yet it becomes all good Men, who are to obey God, and reverence his Institutions, not to be forward in judging themselves disobliged, by the appearance of such Cases as they account extraordinary, from Obedience to any of his Rules of Order. When *Saul* thought he had a Case of Necessity to warrant his Sacrificing, yet God was highly displeased therewith, and deprived him of his Kingdom: Nor might *Uzzah* touch the shaking Ark.

3. In ordinary cases, he who willingly breaks positive Rules established by God's Authority, is guilty of heinous moral

moral Evil, in disobedience to God's Commands, contempt of his Government, and despising the Blessings which he tenders by those Institutions.

Wherefore since Episcopal Ordination hath been of so general Practice, from the Apostles, in the Church of God, and is regularly established and continued in this Kingdom, no Man in this Church, with respect to Order, Unity, and Apostolical Institution, can reasonably expect that God will ever own him as his Officer in the Ministry of Reconciliation, unless he be admitted thereto by such Ordination. And private Christians, both out of Duty to God, and out of respect to their own Safety, may not so esteem of any who oppose themselves against this Order, because of the Danger under the New Testament, of perishing in the gainsaying of *Core*.

And let every Person, whosoever he be, be wary how upon any pretence whatsoever he undertakes to execute any proper part of the Power of the Keys, unless he be set apart thereunto by regular Ordination.

And now I shall conclude my Discourse with three Inferences.

First; This gives us an account whence all that Opposition and Difficulty doth arise, which the Ministration of the Gospel, and the faithful Servants of God therein do meet with. The Devil will use his utmost Power, by all his Methods, to hinder so good a Work as this Ministration is intended for. Hence the Holy Jesus, and most of his Apostles, met with opposition even unto Death. And as all the Persecutions of the Christian Church had an especial eye upon the Clergy, so that violent one under *Diocletian*, for the first Year, singled them only out to be the Subjects of his Fury. These are the ordinary Mark, against whom all the Churches Enemies shoot their poysoned Arrows, envenomed from the Malignity of the Old Serpent.

Euſ. Hiſt. l. 8. c. 12.

And

And when the Evil One cannot proceed by open Violence, he oft makes uſe of Inſtruments to fix ſlanderous Cenſures and Calumnies upon the Officers of Chriſt, to render their Miniſtration the leſs proſperous and ſucceſsful in the World: Inſomuch that their Devoutneſs in Religion is by ſome upbraided with Ceremoniouſneſs; and their conſciencious Obſervance of due Order, and Averſeneſs to Faction, is branded with the odious Term of Popery; and their embracing the neceſſary Reformation of the Church, is by others ſtigmatized with the infamous Names of Hereſy and Schiſm. Thus our Saviour was called *Beelzebub*, himſelf accuſed of Blaſphemy, and his Doctrine of Hereſy.

Beſides theſe things, the vicious and ſcandalous Practices of too many who profeſs the Truth, the various Schiſms, and other manifold Corruptions in the Doctrine and Practice of Religion; and I wiſh I might not add the undue Proceedings of ſome Patrons in conferring Eccleſiaſtical Preferments, are all of them dangerous Methods, made uſe of by the Evil One, to hinder the attaining the great Ends of this Miniſtration.

Secondly; I now addreſs my ſelf to you, my Reverend Brethren. It is a weighty Charge, a Buſineſs of great Importance, that we are called unto; and as we are Stewards of the Living God, it is required of us that we be found faithful. And for the putting us in mind of that ſerious Care and Diligence which we are to uſe in our Miniſtry, I know not how to ſpeak otherwiſe ſo well, as by recommending the ſerious and frequent conſidering that uſeful Exhortation in the Book of Ordination.

And let us particularly look well to our own Paths; for tho the Excellency of God's Ordinances doth not depend upon the Inſtruments, yet if a Blemiſh appears in any of our Lives, it becomes a great Prejudice to the Deſigns we ſhould carry on among Men, and will open the Mouths of our Enemies; and if there be a *Judas* among the Apoſtles, the

the Devil is ready to make a ſpecial uſe of him to his purpoſes. But let us obſerve that Rule, which but a few Verſes after my Text, the Apoſtle tells us was the Practice of himſelf, and other Officers of the Chriſtian Church, *Giving no Offence in any thing, that the Miniſtry be not blamed, but in all things approving our ſelves as the Miniſters of God.* 2 Cor. 6. 3, 4.

Thirdly; Let every one in their places lay to their helping-Hand, to promote the Succeſs of this Miniſtry upon themſelves and others. Wherefore let every Man who lives under the Diſpenſation of the Goſpel, reject all Wickedneſs of Life, and exerciſe himſelf unto Godlineſs; and ſo he will certainly advantage himſelf, and probably others by his good Example.

And let all thoſe who have the management of the Authority of the Church in their hands, indifferently check the Neglect and Contempt of the Publick Service of God, and all other Viciouſneſs and Evil which comes within the Limits of their Authority, and countenance and encourage all real Vertue, Goodneſs, Holineſs, and Religion.

And thoſe Pariſh-Officers, who ſtand charged upon their Oaths to give an account of Offences, which is noted by our 26*th* Canon, to be the chief Means whereby publick Offences may be reformed and puniſhed, and whoſe Miſcarriage is there ſeverely cenſured; let not them ſinfully neglect their Oath and their Duty, the right Diſcharge of which may tend to the Glory of God, the flouriſhing of the Church and Religion, and the bringing Men into the Ways of Happineſs.

And becauſe the Apoſtle propoſeth that humbling Queſtion concerning the Miniſterial Charge, *Who is ſufficient for theſe Things?* Let us earneſtly implore the Help and Grace of God to aſſiſt us, and ſucceed our Miniſtrations to

the great Good of Men. And let every devout Christian join his fervent and frequent Prayer to this end and purpose, That he who hath committed to us this Ministration, would bring all those who partake thereof, unto true Holiness of Life here, and eternal Happiness hereafter, through the Merits of Jesus Christ our Lord: To whom, with the Father and the Holy-Ghost, be all Glory for evermore. *Amen.*

A SERMON Preached at NORWICH, *March* 2. 1678.

JOEL 2. 12.

Therefore also now saith the Lord, Turn ye even to me with all your heart.

IN the foregoing part of this Prophecy there is a dismal appearance of things concerning *Judah*, a heavy threatning of sad Calamities therein, both by Famine and Sword, in the first Chapter and former part of the second. The dreadfulness hereof is represented according to an usual Prophetick Style, as if God was making the whole Fabrick of his Creation to totter; *v.* 10. *The Earth shall quake before them, and the Heavens shall tremble, the Sun and Moon*

ſhall be dark, and the Stars ſhall withdraw their ſhining. And this great Calamity was like to be the more ſad, becauſe of the terror of God's Vengeance going along with it; *v.* 11. *The Day of the Lord is great and very terrible, and who can abide it?*

In ſuch a caſe as this, theſe words (which our Church directeth to be read at the beginning of *Lent*, which is now near, and which are of excellent uſe at all times,) are the beginning of the Prophetical Direction for their help and recovery from this ſad Condition; and ſuch a Remedy as recovereth one gaſping for Life, is worth the valuing. Now here upon the firſt mention of returning to God, are ſome overtures of hope, *v.* 13. *He is gracious and merciful.* v. 14. *Who knows if he will return and repent?* And after the continuance of ſolemn and ſerious Devotion, required in the following Verſes, we have a plain and clear promiſe of help, *v.* 18. *Then will the Lord be jealous for his Land, and pity his People.* So excellent and efficacious a preſcription is true Repentance and returning to God, that upon this the Scene of affairs is preſently changed. And whereas all that part of this Prophecy which goeth before this Text, contained doleful and heavy Judgments: From this Verſe forward there are great Bleſſings and Comforts promiſed to *Judah*, and Judgments denounced againſt her Enemies, even unto the end of this whole Prophecy. Thus hereby the dark Night endeth in the appearance of a bright Day; and the ſtormy Tempeſt is blown over, and behold a Calm.

In theſe words we have,

1. The Authority by which they are commanded, *Therefore alſo now ſaith the Lord.* So that we have here a Divine Law and Precept, even with reſpect to theſe foregoing Circumſtances, which had a terrible Aſpect: But how ſad ſoever they were, God himſelf directs to a way of help. There is no ſtate, how perplexed and uncomfortable

ble ſoever in this World, but which is intended of God to deter Men from Sin. Even in the ſevereſt threatnings of God's Wrath and Anger there is, as *Cl. Alexandrinus* expreſſeth it, ἀγαθελῆς φιλανθρωπία, a kindneſs and love to Men, by ſuch Threatnings to reclaim them from their Sin, and reduce them from the Paths of Ruine. And this Phraſe, *therefore alſo now ſaith the Lord*, doth alſo give notice of ſomewhat remarkable which followeth, which requireth our ſpecial attention and diligent obſervation.

2. The chief thing here expreſſed, is, the Precept or uſeful Direction it ſelf, *Turn ye even unto me with all your heart.* This I ſhall inſiſt upon, and thence ſhall undertake to ſhew,

That Pious and Penitent behaviour towards God, and hearty turning to him, is always uſeful, and is the beſt way for remedy under the greateſt difficulties. And of this I ſhall diſcourſe (as the nature of the ſubject requireth,) with the greateſt plainneſs and evidence that I can. The Duty here enjoined, is of great concernment and uſefulneſs: To a Man's ſelf, a quickned and renewed exerciſe of his Duty brings inward Peace, intitles him to the Bleſſing and Favour of God, and the Rewards of his Kingdom. The ſtate of the World, and of the Church is ſuch, That many Men know not whither to look or turn; and then the moſt uſeful and neceſſary undertaking is, to direct their eyes to God, and turn unto him. Other acts of prudent care are in their places needful alſo; but there is no true Prudence in the neglect of this which is of greateſt moment: The Prodigal Son in his ſtraits could take no wiſer courſe than to bethink himſelf, and return to his Father; and thereby he takes the beſt care of his Duty and his Welfare both together. And this true penitent application to God, is the ſure and only way to obtain his favour. *Zech.* 1. 3. *Turn ye unto me, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, and I will turn unto you, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts.*

In

In ſpeaking to this Duty, I ſhall enquire into theſe two things.

I. What Encouragements have we for obtaining good from God by our hearty turning to him?

II. What is it to turn to God with all our heart; or what muſt be done by us for the right performing this Duty?

Qu. 1. What Encouragements have we that we may receive good from God by hearty turning to him? This enquiry is ſutable to the deſign and occaſion of my Text, theſe words being propoſed as a way for receiving help and good. This alſo is of great uſe with reſpect to the Duty it ſelf; ſince Men are not forward to undertake things which they think will be to no purpoſe, and will tend to no advantage. And this alſo is needful with reſpect to the general ſtate of Religion; ſince he that cometh to God muſt believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him. Wherefore I ſhall here conſider the more general encouragement we have to turn to God, from the nature of God himſelf; and then the particular encouragements from the ſtate and nature of Chriſtianity.

Among the various Encouragements from the Nature and Being of God, I ſhall only mention two things.

1. God's Supreme Government and Authority. Upon this account his favour is highly valuable, becauſe he diſpoſeth of all the great Affairs and Concerns of Men. For he orders the final Judgment which concerns the eternal ſtate of Men; and this will proceed according to the Rules of Righteouſneſs and the New-Covenant, and according to the Sentence which will then be pronounced, muſt every Man's endleſs Condition be. But with reſpect to that Day, thoſe who are hard and impenitent do treaſure up Wrath againſt the day of Wrath; but thoſe who turn unto God,

God, ſhall inherit Life: And God ſo diſpoſeth of all private and publick Affairs in this World, that thereupon it is of great concernment to have him well-pleaſed with us. And if a gracious Prince ſtanding by his faithful Subject, or a righteous Judg taking in with an honeſt and juſt Cauſe, be the Advantage of thoſe who are concerned therein; much more is the Kindneſs and Care of God greatly valuable: For no Evil befalls any without his hand, nor are there any publick Calamities but ſuch as are his Judgments. He can, and oft doth defeat the Counſels of Men, and diſcover their ſecret Contrivances; and he governs them and their Actions, and the Events thereof. Herein we have hitherto had cauſe to admire the Goodneſs and Wiſdom of God, and his Counſel ſhall ſtand.

2. The Goodneſs and Purity of his Nature. This ſhews his great readineſs to expreſs his Favour to them who heartily turn to him. The Order and Beauty of the Creation, and the conſtant and abundant Supplies of Providence, are Evidences of God's great Bounty, and Readineſs to communicate of his Goodneſs to his Creatures. The Light of this World is not ſo diffuſive of it ſelf, as the Goodneſs of God is, ſince from him, as the Father of Lights, cometh every good Gift. But that Purity (which the Perfection of the Divine Being doth aſſure us to be in God, and which even our own Conſciences muſt alſo acknowledg) ſpeaks Goodneſs and Piety to be acceptable to God, and the Perſons who are exerciſed therein to be peculiarly the Objects of his Favour. And as he is a Governour, Obedience and Reverence muſt be both due to him, and pleaſing in his ſight. And indeed no good Man is ſo highly pleaſed with Goodneſs and Seriouſneſs, as the holy God is; and there is nothing in his whole Creation that he eſteems ſo much. He hath ſaid, *Heaven is my Throne, and Earth is my Footſtool; but to this Man will I look, that is poor, and of a contrite Spirit.* Iſa. 66. 1, 2. Now upon this conſideration of the Divine Goodneſs, the *Ninevites* proceeded in their Repentance; and tho that was undertaken upon uncertain hopes,

yet

yet with good ſucceſs. But we have plain Promiſes and Directions to our Duty, and as plain Promiſes annexed thereunto, ſuch as *Ezek.* 18. 20. *I will judg you, O Houſe of* Iſrael, *every one according to his Ways, ſaith the Lord God. Repent, and turn your ſelves from all your Tranſgreſſions, ſo Iniquity ſhall not be your Ruine.*

I come now to conſider ſome peculiar Encouragements from Chriſtianity, and ſhall here mention three.

1. From the coming of the Son of God into the World. He came to be a Mediator, and a Sacrifice, and to aſſure us, that God is ready to be reconciled to all them that turn to him, and entertain the Terms of his Covenant. And therefore thoſe who are truly penitent, ſhall by virtue of the Death and Sacrifice of Chriſt, and the Reconciliation he hath thereby made, obtain the Favour of God. This was ſo much deſigned by our Saviour, that Repentance was one of the firſt things he preached, Mat. 4. 17. *Jeſus began to preach, and to ſay, Repent.* And among the laſt Things which he committed to his Apoſtles before his Aſcenſion, this was one, *That Repentance, and Remiſſion of Sins, ſhould be preached in his Name among all Nations.* Luke 24. 47. And is it not our great Comfort, that the Encouragements to true Repentance are aſſured by the Doctrine of the Goſpel, and by the Death of Chriſt, and that they are confirmed by both the Sacraments of the New Teſtament? If God had not been willing to receive humble Penitents, and to give them his Bleſſings, would he have ſent his Son, and have given ſo great a Bleſſing to the World, as to put us upon returning to him? And if Chriſt came to call Sinners to Repentance, will he not own and receive them who obey his Call? It is true indeed, that the Propoſals of the Goſpel do chiefly relate to God's beſtowing ſpiritual and eternal Bleſſings (and our Care ſhould be eſpecially about theſe things) but even temporal Bleſſings are not excluded from the Promiſes of God.

2. From

2. From the Glory of Christ's Exaltation. He who upon Earth proposed the Grace and Doctrine of Repentance, hath now in Heaven all Authority and Power to dispense the Blessings he promised to them who obey him. And he is faithful and true to perform his Word. Would you obtain Remission of Sin, and the Favour of God? He, as our High-Priest, is our Intercessor, effectually to procure this Blessing from God for them who heartily turn to him. And as our King, he is himself empowered to dispense this Favour of God; *For God hath exalted him to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give Forgiveness of Sins.* Acts 5. 31. And he who took so much pains to seek after the straying Sheep, will no doubt embrace them who by his care do return. If you seek for the Welfare and Preservation of the Church of God, and its being defended against its Enemies; as humble pious Christians are the Heirs of Promise, these Blessings are the Benefits contained in the Covenant and Promise of God. And withal, there are special Encouragements from our Saviour's Exaltation, for our expecting to receive these Mercies: For our Saviour being exalted at God's right-hand, is now made an Head over all things to the Church; and this includes both his near Relation which he beareth to it, and that also he taketh upon himself a very particular Care of it. And his Exaltation is so fatal to his and his Churches Enemies, that he must reign till all his Enemies be made his Footstool. Hereupon he tells *Saul*, going to *Damascus*, that *it was hard for him to kick against the Pricks.* His Enemies must fall before his Power, but he will effect what he undertakes to uphold.

3. From the more particular Consideration of the State of the Gospel-Church. The Christian Church is made up of returning Penitents, but these are owned of God as his Children and Heirs, and they shall shine as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father. And such is God's Care of this Society of his Church, that if it walk in his Way, it shall be supported by him, tho Earth and Hell should contrive against it. Yet no particular Branch or Part of the Chri-

ſtian Church hath any ſecurity of its ſtanding, or any aſſurance from God that it ſhall be preſerved, but upon the Conditions of its holding the Faith, and practiſing Piety and Obedience, or hearty Repentance. And indeed it can have none, becauſe there can be no particular Promiſe from God againſt the Nature and Terms of the New Covenant, which enjoins Faith and Obedience as neceſſary Conditions of Acceptance with God.

The Romiſh Church pretends that ſhe can never fall, but muſt always continue, becauſe of that Promiſe of our Saviour, *Mat.* 16. 18. *On this Rock I will build my Church.* But to this all I ſhall ſay at this time, is, That theſe Words do no way particularly refer to the Roman Church, as it would arrogate to it ſelf. And our Lord hath plainly declared to us, that no Church or Perſons whatſoever can be repreſented by a Houſe built upon a Rock, which will ſtand notwithſtanding all Oppoſitions, but thoſe who hear and obey his Doctrine, which the Church of *Rome* doth not. But all who neglect this Faith and Practice, are as thoſe who build on the Sand; their Houſe will fall, and great will be the Fall thereof. *Mat.* 7. 24, 25, 26, 27. And that there was no particular Privilege of this Nature ever intended to be granted to the Church of *Rome*, is further manifeſt from that Epiſtle St. *Paul* wrote to the *Romans*: For with ſome particular reſpect to that Church, he lets them know, *If God ſpared not the natural Branches, take heed leſt he alſo ſpare not thee; and if thou continue not in his Goodneſs, thou alſo ſhalt be cut off*; Rom. 11. 21, 22. But all particular Churches whatſoever, who heartily obey the Doctrine of the Goſpel, are ſecured of God's eſpecial Care and Preſervation from thoſe Words of our Saviour, *John* 15. 2. *Every Branch in me that beareth Fruit, my Father purgeth it, that it may bring forth more Fruit.* The fruitful part of his Vineyard will not want his Care.

And it is our great Comfort, that God's Catholick Church ſtands by his Foundation upon a Rock, ſo that the Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt it, or no kind of Deſtruction

ſhall

ſhall be able to overcome it. So that whatever Enemies it hath in the World, they, like the proud and mighty Waves, if they daſh themſelves againſt the Rock, will be broken in pieces; but the Rock it ſelf, and that which is built upon it, as an impregnable Fortreſs, ſtandeth firm. For the Comfort of the Primitive Chriſtians, the Book of the *Revelations* gave them aſſurance, that God would take care that his Church ſhould not be overwhelmed by the Perſecutions it endured, but ſhould prevail under them. And if it had not been from the Support of the Power of God, the Chriſtian Church in its weakeſt Eſtate could never have ſtood againſt the Wiſdom and Power of the World, which was then engaged againſt it; but God then did, and yet will uphold his Church even to the end. And with a particular eye to God's eſpecial Care hereof in theſe latter Times, we read, that when the Thouſand Years were ended, and the Nations, and *Gog* and *Magog* compaſſed the Camp of the Saints, and the beloved City, then *Fire came from God out of Heaven, and devoured them*, Rev. 20. 8, 9. And thoſe Interpreters, who would underſtand theſe Phraſes of the *Camp of the Saints*, and the *Beloved City*, concerning any particular City or Place upon Earth, ſeem not herein to obſerve the Nature of the Prophetick Style, which will direct us to underſtand it of the more eminent and chief part of the Chriſtian Church.

Wherefore we have great grounds for expecting Good from God, if we mind our Duty to him. Now upon this Encouragement, let us in the Fear of God undertake this Duty, that we may be inſtrumental to the procuring Good to the Church of God, and that we our ſelves may be Partakers of eternal Happineſs. This is the way to have God to be our Friend; and no other Peace in the World can be concluded and ſecured upon thoſe advantagious Terms, as our having Peace with God may be. And therefore I ſhall now come to the ſecond thing I propoſed to diſcourſe of, what we are here commanded to do.

Queſt. 2. What is it to turn to God with all our Heart?

Anſw. This is one and the ſame thing with Repentance. The Septuagint expreſs this Phraſe of *Turning* in the Text by ἐπιστρέφεσθαι, or being converted to God. And this ſuppoſeth or includeth,

1. A ſerious Conſideration and minding of our Rule, together with the Motives that ſhould put us upon a Practice anſwerable thereto. This Rule is the Word of God, or the Holy Scripture, as ſuperadded to the natural Light of Reaſon and Conſcience. Upon due pondering of this, *Joſiah*'s Heart was tender, and he humbled himſelf, and undertook a Reformation.

2. Self-reflection and Examination of our Minds, Ways, and Actions by this Rule, with this ſtedfaſt purpoſe, that nothing may be entertained or allowed in us, which is not agreeable thereunto.

3. An humble and ſerious Sorrow for paſt Miſcarriages, with hearty and unfeigned Confeſſion of Sin, and earneſt Supplication to God for the obtaining Mercy.

4. A reſolved undertaking to forſake all Evil in Heart and Life, and to do our Duty.

Theſe things are ſo plain in the Nature of them, and ſo evidently neceſſary in their general Conſideration, that they need not either further Explication or Proof. The Practice and Exerciſe of Repentance, and turning to God, taketh in all theſe; but both the Phraſe of *Turning*, and the chief Deſign of Repentance hath principal reſpect to the laſt of them, it being all one to turn to God, and to return to, and carefully ſet upon our Duty. And therefore I ſhall now inſiſt on this; and that we may practiſe theſe things to good effect, I ſhall urge ſome particular Inſtances, which are of great uſe to be performed in our minding this Duty.

1. In avoiding Schiſms and Diviſions, and practiſing Unity and Peace.

2. In

2. In the forſaking Debauchery and Profaneneſs, and the embracing Seriouſneſs and Sobriety.

3. In rejecting all Irreligion, and Neglect of the Worſhip of God, and engaging our ſelves in true Piety and hearty Devotion.

1. In the avoiding Schiſms and Diviſions, and practiſing Unity and Peace. How many and frequent are the Precepts for Peace and Unity delivered in the Doctrine of our Saviour? and how earneſtly is this urged and inculcated? *If there be any Conſolation in Chriſt*, &c. (ſaith the Apoſtle, Phil. 2. 1, 2.) *Fulfill ye my Joy, being of one accord, and of one mind.* And if we view and conſider the Buſineſs of our Religion, as it was delivered by our Saviour and his Apoſtles, this will be found to be one of its great and weighty Precepts. And ſhall we then be forward to contend about other leſſer things, to the neglect of this? As the Scribes and Phariſees would tithe *Mint, Aniſe, and Cummin*, but neglected *the weighty Things of God's Law.* St. *Paul* tells us, *The Kingdom of God is not Meat and Drink, but Righteouſneſs, Peace, and Joy in the Holy-Ghoſt: For he that in theſe Things ſerveth Chriſt, is acceptable to God, and approved of Men.* Rom. 14. 17, 18. In which Words it is very plainly aſſerted, that whilſt ſome other Things which Men may contend about, are of leſs moment, theſe Things here mentioned are of great concernment to Religion it ſelf, and the being eſteemed of God and good Men. And as Peace is one of theſe great Duties here urged, ſo that the Apoſtle had a very particular Eye thereupon, may be concluded from the Words immediatly following, *v.* 19. *Let us therefore follow after the Things which make for Peace.* And the Neglect of this Duty is very hurtful and pernicious to the Chriſtian Church: For as in the Body, when it is rent and torn, and the Members disjointed, there muſt be from this very Cauſe great Diſorders, Weakneſs, and Feebleneſs; ſo is it alſo in the Church of God. Yea, theſe Things are to be accounted of dangerous Conſequence, for the

the undermining or ſhaking the Kingdom of Chriſt, ſince our Lord himſelf hath told us, *that a Kingdom divided againſt it ſelf, is brought to Deſolation.* And ſhall any good Man be pleaſed to join with the Enemy in his Deſigns againſt the welfare, ſtability and ſafety of the Church of Chriſt?

Now, beſides many other Arguments which might be inſiſted on, to diſſwade from Schiſms and Diviſions, there are two things I ſhall recommend to you, as being well worthy your ſerious conſideration.

Firſt, making Diviſions in the Church, either includes a total want, or at leaſt a defect in a great degree of the true Spirit of Chriſtianity: This muſt needs be ſo, becauſe the obſerving Peace and Unity are ſo great a part and duty of our Religion. If we reflect on our Baptiſm, we are baptized into one Body, and therefore are to obſerve Unity. And when S. *Paul* urgeth the *Epheſians* to take care of that great Duty, of *walking worthy of that Vocation wherewith they were called*, Eph. 4. 1. To that end he moſt particularly and largely inſiſts on their *keeping the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace*, v. 3, *&c.* And from this very Reaſon he concluded the *Corinthians* to be carnal, becauſe of the envying, ſtrife, and diviſions that were among them, 1 *Cor.* 3. 3. And where-ever the Peace and Unity of the Church is broken from thoſe corrupt Principles of Pride, Self-will, and the careleſneſs of obeying God's Commandments, this ſpeaks ſuch an unchriſtian temper as will exclude ſuch Perſons from the Kingdom of God. And therefore thoſe very phraſes the Apoſtle makes uſe of to expreſs the Diſcords and Rents in the Church of *Corinth*, ζῆλος ἔρις, and διχοστασίαι, are all of them enumerated in his Epiſtle to the *Galatians*, (tho there they be rendred by other Engliſh Words, *Gal.* 5. 20.) among thoſe Works of the Fleſh, concerning which we are told with earneſtneſs of expreſſion, that *they that do ſuch things, ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God.*

And

And I think it considerable to be further observed, that even in such Persons who are of a better Spirit, and who in the main, close with the other Duties and Rules of Christianity, their miscarriage in this particular, in not holding the Peace and Unity of the Church, will lessen and abate the degrees of that future Glorious Reward which they would otherwise receive: And this I think is sufficiently declared by St. *Paul*, in his first Epistle to the *Corinthians*; when he had rebuked the *Corinthians* for their Divisions, one being of *Paul*, and another of *Apollo*, 1 *Cor.* 3. 1, 2, 3, 4. he still keeping his Eye upon, and having an aim at these Divisions, as appears from that third, and the former part of the fourth Chapter, tells them concerning them who hold to that only foundation which the Apostles laid, *If any shall build thereupon that which will not abide the Trial; if his work shall be burnt, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by Fire.* v. 15. That is, if any such person shall be engaged in Divisions in the Church, or in any other unwarrantable Action or Doctrine, it shall go the worse with him, and be hereafter to his loss; and though he escape Misery and obtain Life, it shall be with the greater hazard, danger, and difficulty. And therefore he who would seek his own greatest Good, must carefully avoid this miscarriage.

Secondly; Consider how extreamly opposite, and contrary divisions in the Church are to Christ himself. He is one Lord and Head, he hath by one Spirit and in one Baptism established his Church to be one Body in one and the same Faith and Doctrine, and upon the same Hope of their Calling; and under the same Only God and Father of all. And all these things S. *Paul* urgeth, as containing in them special Obligations for Christian Unity, *Eph.* 4. 3, 4, 5, 6. And besides all the Precepts of his Doctrine, let us seriously observe how much our dying Saviour did earnestly and again, desire and pray that all his Disciples might be one, *John* 17. 11, 21, 23. And this he twice expresseth in his

Prayer

Prayer to be desired to this end, *that the World might believe that thou hast sent me.* Now if it would be an unworthy thing for any person against all reason and duty to oppose the Dying Request of the best Friend he ever had in the World; it must needs be unaccountable to act against that which was even at the point of Death, so affectionately and importunately desired by our Lord and Saviour. Was this aimed at by our Lord as an useful means to bring over the World to believe in him? and will any who have any Honour for Christ or Love for Men be so uncharitable as to be engaged in any such Works as tend to keep off Men from Christianity; and from obtaining Salvation by Jesus Christ. But this is sufficiently intimated by our Saviour to be the sad effect of the Divisions in his Church. To all this I shall further add that it is related by *Crusius (Turcogræc. lib. 3. part 1. p. 234.) that it is the daily Prayer of the* Turks, *that Christians may not be at Unity.* And they who are of the Church of *Rome* express their delight and satisfaction in our Disagreements. *Baronius (Annal. Eccles. An. 344. n. 9.)* makes use of this as a considerable Argument against the truth of the Protestant Doctrine: and *Salmeron (Tom. 9. Tr. 16. n. 1.)* declares that this is that which giveth them expectations of prevailing against us. And now shall any who own themselves the true followers of Christ, so undertake to contradict the dying Request of their Saviour, as in the mean time to chuse that which complieth with, and gratifieth the Desires both of the professed Enemies of his Religion, and of those also who strangely corrupt and pervert his Doctrine and Gospel?

But after all this, or whatsoever else may be spoken to this purpose, there are two sorts of Men who I doubt are not like to be perswaded.

1. I fear there are some fierce Men, who are so far from having hearts inclined to do this Duty, that they have not Patience to hear it, but rather to turn angry, and to cry out, as the Lawyer did to our Saviour, *Thus saying, thou reproachest us also.* But it will become them, and others too,

to

to bethink themſelves of the ſad danger of all thoſe perſons who will not hearken, but ſtop their Ears to ſuch plain Duties as thoſe of Peace and Unity are. But theſe Truths muſt be ſpoken, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear.

2. And others there are who will acknowledg in general the Truth of all I have ſaid of the great Sin and Evil of Schiſms and Diviſions. And though they be engaged in the dividing Parties, will plead their own Innocence, and charge the fault of theſe Diviſions wholly upon the order and conſtitution of our Church, and not upon themſelves. Now here much might be ſaid to ſhew that the Worſhip and Service of God in our Church is agreeable to the true Chriſtian Rule; and that on the other hand there are many things unaccountable, yea, and unlawful, which are embraced without ſcruple by Diſſenters, and contended for by the dividing Parties. But this would be too long for me to inſiſt upon in my preſent Diſcourſe. Wherefore, inſtead thereof, I ſhall mention a ſenſible and ocular Demonſtration, that it is not the Conſtitution of our Church, but the ill temper of dividing Spirits, that is the true cauſe of our Diviſions; And that is this, That when this Conſtitution was thrown aſide between thirty and forty years ſince, the Rents and Diviſions of the Church were not by this means removed, but to the grief of good Men they were greatly encreaſed thereby; and the Spirits of many Men in this particular have been the worſe ever ſince.

Let all of us therefore take heed to our ſelves, that we keep in the paths of Peace and Unity; and let us mourn and pray for others who neglect them.

II. A ſecond thing to be done in our turning to God, is the forſaking all Viciouſneſs and Debauchery, and becoming Serious and Sober. Vice defiles and debaſeth the nature of Man. It is ſo much againſt Reaſon and Conſcience, and is ſo far condemned by the common ſenſe of Mankind, that it generally paſſeth for a diſparagement in

the World. And Viciouſneſs is ſo much againſt the intereſt of Men, and the good of the World, that thereupon it is prohibited and puniſhed by the Laws even of Barbarous Nations. This is the great Folly of Evil Men, whilſt hereby under the appearances of trifling Pleaſures, great Cheats are impoſed upon Men, who ſhould be wiſer than to be thus decoyed into Temporal Evils and Eternal Miſeries. Now in turning to God, there muſt be a breaking off from Sin by Repentance; or a Care to depart from Evil, and to do Good. Nor is it enough that there be a mere reſtraint upon outward Actions of Evil; but there muſt be alſo an hearty Reſolution and inward Hatred againſt Sin, and a ſincere Love of what is Good: And that this may be effectual, it muſt be ſet upon timely and preſently; as a Wiſe Man will uſe his utmoſt diligence to put a ſtop to a dangerous Diſeaſe before it be too late, and it become incurable. To this purpoſe let theſe three things be conſidered.

Firſt, Conſider how all Vice and Wickedneſs of Life is contrary to the nature of God; Such is the Purity of the Divine Being, that Sin is more oppoſite and hateful unto God, than to the moſt Vertuous Man that lives in the World. God is Light, and in him is no Darkneſs at all; and it is as poſſible for the black Darkneſs to ſtand before the brightneſs of the Sun's Light, as for the workers of Iniquity to be approved by the Holy God: The ſingular purity of his Laws, and the exceeding dreadfulneſs of his Threats againſt Wickedneſs, are intended to deter Men from the commiſſion thereof. And if we take notice of the inſtances and examples of God's diſpleaſure againſt Sin, theſe are very numerous. It was Diſobedience that turned *Adam* out of Paradiſe; Debauchery and Wickedneſs was that which unpeopled the old World, and cauſed them to be deſtroy'd by a Deluge; and *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* to be conſumed by Fire and Brimſtone from Heaven. By the like ſinful practices, the *Jews* who were God's peculiar People, and to whom he was as an Husband, were divorced from him,

him; and divers Calamities have been brought down upon other Persons and Nations. And yet all these things come far short of what will be manifested at the great Day, when the terrible Sentence of Eternal Perdition will be pronounced against all Evil-doers, who shall perish with everlasting Destruction from the Presence of the Lord.

Secondly; Consider how much wicked works are peculiarly opposite to Christianity. Sin is of the nature of the Devil; he is the Spirit that worketh in the Children of Disobedience; but the Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the Devil, 1 *Joh.* 3. 8. The Life of Christ was such, that thereby he left us an example that we should follow his Steps who did no Sin; and his Doctrine teacheth us, that we should deny Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts. Even our Baptism is an undertaking to Renounce the Devil, and become dead unto Sin. And it is more unaccountable for Debauchery to be in a Christian, than for the brutish nature to inhabit the Soul and Body of a Man; because this not only opposeth our Profession of Christianity, but the designs of our Redeemer also. His coming into the World, and his Death and Passion was, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify to himself a People zealous of good Works. But that the Works of Darkness should be embraced by the Children of Light; that they should yield up themselves to the Evil one, who have plentiful Aids and Assistances of Divine Grace to withstand and overcome him, is a thing altogether inexcusable.

Thirdly; Consider, that Viciousness is the more intolerable, when God's hand appears to be lifted up. Corrections and Judgments are some of the last and most powerful means which God makes use of for Man's amendment. By these *Pharaoh* was brought to Submission, and *Ahab* to Humiliation: And it hath been observed, that the *Israelites* after the Seventy years Captivity in *Babylon*, were never prone to follow after other Gods, as they had frequently

done before, notwithſtanding their Inſtructions from the Prophets for towards a Thouſand years; and it is then expected that when God's Judgments are in the Earth, the Inhabitants of the World will learn Righteouſneſs; for there muſt be great obſtinacy and hardneſs, where the fears or ſtrokes of the hand of God make no Impreſſion. Now we have heard of the Calamities of Neighbour Countreys, and God hath exerciſed us with ſevere Chaſtiſements not many years ſince; his hand is now ſtretched out: if we heartily turn to him, we have reaſon to hope it will be for our help; but if not, we have cauſe to fear it will be to our hurt.

III. The third and laſt thing I ſhall mention to be done in hearty turning to God, is, To reject all Irreligion and neglect of the Worſhip of God, and to be exerciſed in the Religious Service of God, with true Piety and hearty Devotion. Wherefore,

1. Let no neglect of Religion have any place amongſt us, or let all miſcarriages herein be carefully amended. The Worſhip of God, and the Inſtitutions of our Bleſſed Saviour are by too many diſregarded. But yet the Love and Fear of God, the ſerving him, and walking in all good Conſcience before him, is greatly needful to be undertaken with ſerious Diligence. This is a very great Duty of Man; for if a Child be obliged to give Honour and Reverence to his Father, or a Servant to his Maſter, or a Subject to his Prince, much more muſt Man ſtand engaged to worſhip and ſerve his Creator. The Precepts in the Holy Scripture to this purpoſe, are ſo plain and frequent, that no Man who reads the Scriptures can be ignorant of them; and they who never read them, do acknowledg this Duty by the evidence of the light of Nature it ſelf. Our owning Chriſtianity is not only a Name or Profeſſion, but is an undertaking to mind that Piety which is ſuitable to Religion. In this Profeſſion St. *Paul* declares his own great care to have been to worſhip the God of his Fathers after the way

which

which the *Jews* called Hereſy, that is, according to the true Rules and Doctrine of Chriſtianity. And the whole multitude of the Chriſtian Church is repreſented by St. *John*, as ſtanding before the Throne, and crying with a loud voice, *Salvation be to God and to the Lamb* (Rev. 7. 9, 10.) and therefore they are not worthy to be accounted any part of the Chriſtian Church, who neglect the Worſhip of the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

This alſo is our intereſt and benefit. For the moſt noble and excellent employment of Man is in thoſe things which relate to God and Goodneſs, when otherwiſe in the neglect of this, he is taken up either about empty Vanities, mean Earth, or ſordid Filth. But the Service of God is both his Honour and his Advantage, and the Promiſes which are made to Religious Piety are great and ſure; but becauſe they are propoſed under the terms of a Covenant, there can be no ſecurity of enjoying the preſent Bleſſings of God, and no poſſibility of attaining endleſs Felicity without theſe Holy Exerciſes.

2. Let the exerciſe of Religion be performed with hearty and ſerious Devotion, even with Faſting, and ſolemn Humiliation and Prayer; theſe are Duties directed by the Prophet *Joel* in the latter part of this Verſe of my Text, to expreſs our hearty turning unto God: And the Church doth particularly at this time call upon us to mind theſe Holy Exerciſes; they are Duties uſeful at all times, and are excellent qualifications to diſpoſe us aright for the obtaining the Pardon of our own Sins, as they include the practice of Humility, Piety, Faith and Repentance. Amongſt the *Jews*, the ſolemn day of Atonement and Remiſſion was a day of devout Faſting and Afflicting their Souls. And after S. *Paul* had been ſtricken down to the Ground as he went toward *Damaſcus*, after he had Faſted three days and Prayed, *Ananias* was then ſent to him by our Saviour, that he might ariſe and be Baptized, and waſh away his Sins, *Acts* 9. 9, 11, 17, 18. ch. 22. 16.

At this time the methods of God's Providence do eminently

nently require our more than ordinary diligence in these Duties for the averting his Judgments, and the preserving us and our Posterity from Ruine and Misery. Let those who have been Vicious and Disobedient, engage herein with Reformation and Amendment of Life. And let the most Pious Men also undertake it with the greatest seriousness, even in them it is an exercise of Repentance, as indeed the whole practice of Christianity is; for the Christian Life is a turning to God, from whom sinful Man had estranged himself; and the whole thereof is described by Repenting, and turning to God, and doing works meet for Repentance; and the Repentance undertaken therein, is not only in some short transitory acts, but it taketh in the whole course of a Christian Progress. These devout Performances of the best Men are of great use for obtaining publick Blessings from God. And it cannot be supposed that the Religious Addresses of *Moses* or *Josiah*, who were Men of great Piety, should be less acceptable to God, or less effectual for the good of Man, than the Repentance of *Ahab* or *Manasseh*, or of the *Ninevites*.

But let these things be done with true uprightness and sincerity of Heart, and then our Blessed Saviour hath assured them who so *fast and pray in secret, that their Heavenly Father will reward them openly*. But withall, that these Duties may be pleasing to God, it is necessary that they be accompanied with those other things which I have before pressed. Fasting and Prayer, in the neglect of Peace and Unity, and of Holiness and Piety, is as the sacrificing an unclean thing, far from being approved of God; and this is the account the Prophet *Isaiah* gives, why God would not accept these very performances of the *Jews*, *Behold* (saith he) *ye fast for Strife and Debate, and to smite with the Fist of wickedness*.

Wherefore now let us take the advice in the Text, and resolve on the pious practice thereof, especially in these particulars I have insisted on. For the further enforcing of which, I shall in concluding observe three things.

First,

First, That it was God's own direction in these words of *Joel*. This was indeed immediately given to the *Jews*, but the Apostle tells us, *Rom.* 15. 4. *Whatsoever things were written afore-time, were written for our Learning, that we through Patience and Comfort of the Scripture might have hope.* That which God thinks fit to advise us, it is our Wisdom to practise. For when the Policy of Wise Men may be outwitted, and all sinful contrivances will encrease danger, the Counsel of God that will stand; and, as Wisdom speaks, (*Prov.* 1. 33.) *Whoso hearkneth to me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from the fear of Evil.*

Secondly; Reflect again on the case in which this was directed. Besides the terribleness of the Armies which were to come against them in the former Verses of this second Chapter of *Joel*, God lets them know that he himself was like to be on their Enemies side against them, *v.* 11. *The Lord shall utter his Voice before his Army.* The Prophet *Joel* was sent to make Proclamation of God's Controversy with them; but though this was declared by a Message from God, it was not so absolutely determined, but that there was still an Help and Remedy reserved, if they would make use thereof, by turning to God with all their heart. In like manner, when *Jonas* was sent to *Nineveh* to declare that within forty days it should be destroyed, upon its Repentance it was spared. And the Prophet *Jeremy* assures us, that *at what instant God shall speak concerning a Nation, or concerning a Kingdom, to pluck up, to pull down, and to destroy; if that Nation turn from their Evil, he will repent of the Evil that he thought to do unto them.* No case is so bad, but if this course be made use of, it will appear hopeful.

Thirdly; Consider the greatness of the effect. I observed before, that in this Prophecy from this Text forward, are contained Promises of Deliverance. The effect was also answerable to these Promises. Indeed the precise time of *Joel's* Prophecy is not certain: It is thought both by the *Jewish* writers, and by Ancient Fathers, that his time was contemporary with that of *Hosea*; and this Prophecy in all pro-

probability must be dated before the latter part, if not before the beginning of *Hezekiah*'s Reign: and accordingly *Grotius* seems very reasonably to understand the beginning of this Chapter to refer to *Sennacherib*'s Army which invaded *Judah*; this Army here mentioned was indeed called the Northern Army, *Joel* 2. 20. but this expression might well enough agree to the *Assyrian* Army; as may appear from *Zeph.* 2. 3. *He will stretch out his hand against the North, and destroy* Assyria. Now at this time the Sins of *Judah* were great and many, especially under *Ahaz*, their Condition was low and despised, and their Enemy was potent, proud and insolent; yet upon the Pious Reformation of *Judah* under *Hezekiah*, and their earnest Religious Addresses to God, their Enemies proud Designs were wholly blasted, and themselves ruined; and the blessing of God came down upon *Judah* and *Jerusalem*.

And God grant that we may take that course, that we may enjoy the Blessing of God, and have it ever continued to these Churches and Realms, even until the coming again of our Blessed Saviour: to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour, and Glory, and Praise, now and evermore. Amen.

A SERMON

Preached on

S. Mat. 5. 20. *For I ſay unto you, That except your Righteouſneſs ſhall exceed the Righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees, ye ſhall in no caſe enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.*

RELIGION and Righteouſneſs is ſo ſuitable to, and perfective of the Nature of Man, that it hath been thereupon recommended by the wiſeſt Men, and greateſt Philoſophers. It is of ſuch concernment for humane Society, that all Lawgivers and Governours have thought it neceſſary to prohibit and reſtrain the Violation thereof. And it carrieth ſo much of the Image of God in it, that all his Revelations to the Patriarchs and Prophets, and eſpecially that by the Holy Jeſus to the Chriſtian Church, do greatly inſiſt upon it.

When the Gentile World went greatly aſtray by their abominable Idolatries, and their groſs Impurities, even in their pretendedly Religious Rites, the Doctrine of the Goſpel appears to turn them from the Power of Satan unto

God. When the Jews had been under a lower Diſpenſation, our Lord gives his Diſciples more excellent Rules, and enlargeth the Precepts of the Moral Law, as was truly aſſerted by *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, St. *Auguſtine*, and other ancient Writers. And why ſhould it be thought ſtrange, that Lawgiver ſhould add to the Precepts already given, and extend them further, who eſtabliſhed many new Duties, ſuch as to believe the peculiar Doctrines of the Chriſtian Faith, to perform many religious Services in his Name, and with an eye to him; to attend on the Goſpel-Sacraments; to reverence the Chriſtian Miniſtry, and the Power of the Keys; and to own and embrace Communion with the diffuſive Catholick Church in all Nations? He laid new Obligations upon his Diſciples concerning Divorce, and the changing the Zeal of *Elias* into Chriſtian Meekneſs. And it is but reaſonable to expect, that under the Inſtructions and Motives of Chriſtianity, there ſhould be required greater Meaſures of the Love of God and Goodneſs. But when the Jewiſh Church had in their Principles and Practices groſly degenerated from the great Deſign of the Law, and many Corruptions were introduced, our Lord proteſts againſt them, and gives his Diſciples this Admonition, *That their Righteouſneſs muſt exceed the Righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees.*

The Phariſees were the ſtricteſt Sect of the Jews at that time, the Scribes were their chief Teachers and Guides; their Righteouſneſs here intended, was what was according to the Rules and Doctrines they delivered and received:
Mat. 16. 12. Againſt that Leaven of Doctrine our Lord warned his Diſciples.

The out-doing and exceeding this Righteouſneſs is ſo neceſſary, that it is enjoined under this ſevere Sanction, *That otherwiſe we can in no caſe enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* The *Kingdom of Heaven* is a Phraſe peculiar to St. *Matthew*, among all the Penmen of the Scripture, but hath been obHor. Hebr. in Mat. 3. 3. ſerved not to be unuſual in the *Talmud*, and other Jewiſh Writers. It ſometimes expreſſeth in this Evangeliſt the King-

Kingdom of Chriſt in his Church on Earth; but in this place and others, the Kingdom of Glory and eternal Happineſs. But if any ſhould think theſe Words directly to aſſert, that none whoſe Righteouſneſs exceeds not that of the Phariſees, and their Teachers the Scribes, can be true Members of the Chriſtian Church, and Chriſt's Kingdom upon Earth, he muſt conſequently acknowledg that they cannot be Heirs of Heaven.

Yet theſe Phariſees were not ſo wholly irreligious, but that they attended the Temple and Synagogues, made many Prayers, ſeem'd to have a great Veneration for the Law, and a Zeal for the Honour of the God of *Iſrael*. They were not ſo groſly diſſolute and debauched, as to give themſelves up to Uncleanneſs, Intemperance, and all Unmercifulneſs; but they condemned Adultery, faſted, and gave Alms. Wherefore it may be needful to enquire,

I. What were the Miſcarriages in their Righteouſneſs, and wherein muſt we exceed them, if ever we attain to Happineſs?

II. How ſtands the Caſe of thoſe Societies who chiefly pretend to Chriſtianity, as to their exceeding or not exceeding the Righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees?

III. What is the Reſult of theſe Enquiries?

I. Touching their Miſcarriages and Defects.

1. They placed much Righteouſneſs in their being a peculiar Party, and maintaining a kind of Separation. They were a particular Sect, having and needleſly affecting ſingular Practices and Opinions, different from the other Jews, and ſuch as were not enjoined in the Law of *Moſes*. The Name *Phariſee* is from פרש to ſeparate and divide; and themſelves were diſtinguiſhed into ſeven ſorts, as the Jewiſh Writers tell us.

They did not indeed withdraw themſelves from the Synagogue, or Temple Publick-Worſhip, ſince, as *Joſephus* ſaith, ὅπουα θεῖα, whatſoever referred to God, both Prayer, and other parts of Worſhip, were much ordered by their Model. But concerning the Synagogue-Worſhip, there is probable Evidence, that the ſeveral chief Sects among the Jews, and therefore the Phariſees as one of them, had their diſtinct Aſſemblies. And it is certain, the Phariſees did reject the beſt of Men from their Synagogue-Communion, meerly for doing their neceſſary Duty, in profeſſing, upon the fulleſt Divine Teſtimony, that Jeſus was the Chriſt, and becoming his Followers. And in the Temple-Worſhip, the Phariſees were guilty of a kind of Separation, under an appearance of Communion: For ſince the daily Sacrifice in the Temple was a Burnt-Offering, and therefore appointed for Expiation and Atonement, the Devotions of them who attended at the Temple at the Hours of Prayer and Sacrifice ought to be conformable thereunto; but the Phariſees Prayer there, as our Saviour deſcribes it, had nothing in it of humble Supplication for God's Mercy and Favour, but he thanks God he was not as other Men. And this Spirit of Diviſion was ſo much the worſe in them, becauſe it was founded in an high Conceit, and great Confidence of their own Righteouſneſs, though they had little reaſon for it, and in a contempt of others.

Antiq. Jud. l. 18. c. 2.

Num. 28. 3.

But now ſuch a proud Temper is inconſiſtent with Chriſtianity, which makes Humility a neceſſary Qualification for the obtaining everlaſting Life.

And Diviſions and Separations are ſo unaccountable for the Members of the ſame Body the Church to be engaged in, that the Doctrine of Chriſt gives us frequent Precepts, earneſt Exhortations, and preſſing Arguments to Peace and Unity, and plainly expreſſeth the great Danger of Miſery in the neglect thereof. When ἔριες ζῆλοι and διχοστασίαι, or Conteſts, fierce Heats and Diviſions are reckoned among thoſe Works of the Fleſh which exclude from the Kingdom of God, *Gal.* 5. can any think the great Diſcords in the

the Church unconcerned herein, when the Concord of Christians is here chiefly enjoined, and the Neglect thereof is every way exceeding hurtful, and when all these very Expressions are used by St. *Paul* to set forth the Divisions of the *Church of Corinth?* 1 *Cor.* 3. 3. And therefore where-ever Rents or Schisms in the Church are Works of the Flesh, as they must be when they are the Product of Pride, Self-will, or voluntary Disobedience to, or Neglect of the Precepts of Peace and Unity, they are destructive.

The Ancient Church charged an high Guilt upon these Practices. St. *Cyprian* accounts Schism greatly to deprive Men of the Hope of Christianity. And St. *Austin* maintains against the *Donatists*, that their Separation was as great a Sin as that of the *Traditores*, who gave up the Scriptures into the hands of their Persecutors, with which Crime the *Donatists* falsly charged one of the Ordainers of *Cæcilianus*, and pretended this as a ground of their Separation. Cypr. ep. 76.

2. Their Righteousness did much consist in such a Zeal as was disorderly, fierce, furious, and censorious. They were diligent in compassing Sea and Land to make Proselites, but it was that they might be their Followers and Admirers. Their professing a great Respect to the Prophets, and their Pretence of Traditions, was chiefly to gain Credit to their own Dictates. Their Zeal was a violent espousing the Interest of their own Errors, and was not so much for God, and his Law, as for themselves, and their own Party; like that of the *Donatists*, mentioned by *Baronius*, who could with more patience hear Men speak lightly of Christ, than of *Donatus*. Annal. Eccles. an. 306. n. 42.

And they were so censorious, that they not only despised the Publicans, but esteemed the People as not knowing the Law, to be cursed; and condemned the most holy Jesus for a Blasphemer, an Enemy to *Cæsar*, and one who cast out Devils by the Prince of Devils. Their violent Fierceness was evident by their bloody Cruelties under the Government of *Alexandria*, and at other times, and especially Jos. Antiq. l. 13. c. 24.

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in their being much concerned in profecuting our Lord to the Death, and treating him with ſo many Indignities, and his Apoſtles after him with various Methods of Hatred and Cruelty, and particularly murdering *James the Juſt*, the firſt Biſhop of *Jeruſalem*.

But in the Religion of our Saviour, the contrary Temper of purſuing true and ſincere Piety, Faith, and the Fear and Love of God, and of Mercifulneſs, Meekneſs and Charity, is made indiſpenſably neceſſary to our eternal Happineſs. And to this end we are commanded to *learn of Chriſt to be meek and lowly, that we may find Reſt unto our Souls.* But if St. *James* and St. *John* be for calling for Fire from Heaven, this is declared to be greatly oppoſite to the Spirit of the Goſpel: For tho it allows and eſtabliſheth juſt Rules of Government, and the Uſe of the Power of the Sword therein, yet it condemns all Cruelty and Fury. And if St. *Peter* in his Zeal will unwarrantably draw his Sword, he muſt receive a ſevere Check from our Lord and Maſter.

Mat. 11. 29.

3. They miſcarried alſo by their unduly affecting the Vogue and Applauſe of Men in their Religious Performances. To this purpoſe they made broad their Philacteries, that they might ſeem to Men to give great reſpect to thoſe Precepts of the Law inſcribed in them, concerning the worſhipping, acknowledging, and obeying God. And for a pretence of extraordinary Sanctity, they made uſe of long Prayers, and put up their Devotions even in the Corners of the Streets. And their Faſting, Praying, and giving Alms, was done that they might be ſeen of Men, while it might well have become ſuch Actions to have been managed by a better Principle.

Exod. 13. 2, 5. Deut. 6. 4. & ch. 11, 13, 14, 15.

By this means they gained a great Intereſt among the People, but made uſe of it to very ill purpoſes, even to the oppoſing the Doctrine of our Saviour. And *Joſephus* tells us, they could καὶ τὰ βασιλέως ἢ κατὰ ἀρχιερέως δύθυς πιθέσθαι, by their Credit bring the People to be ill-affected either to the King or the High-Prieſt. But our Saviour pronounceth

Antiq. Jud. Lib. 3. c. 18.

frequent

frequent Woes againſt them for their Hypocriſy, and lets them know that all this while they are out of God's Favour, and that what is highly eſteemed among Men is an Abomination in the ſight of God. Luke 16. 15.

Now both Reaſon and Religion will recommend a good Name as uſeful and deſirable, ſo far as it can be gained in doing our Duty, and practiſing Sincerity. But if the World be ſo degenerate, that the faithful and upright Man muſt needs meet with Cenſures and Revilings here, as Chriſt himſelf and his Apoſtles did, ſo muſt all his Diſciples, take up the Croſs, and bear the Reproach. In this caſe the Bleſſed Jeſus declared, *Wo be to you, when all Men ſhall ſpeak well of you.* Luke 6. 26. And whereas the Scribes and Phariſees are ſaid to *do all their Works to be ſeen of Men*, Mat. 23. 5. St. *Hierom* there affirms, that he who in this is like to them, *Scriba & Phariſæus eſt*, is in the ſame condition with the Scribes and Phariſees. Hieronym. in Mat. 23. When St. *Peter*, againſt the Rule of his Duty, would withdraw from the Gentiles, to ingratiate himſelf with the Jews, St. *Paul* thought it neceſſary to reprove him ſharply, as not walking uprightly, and according to the Truth of the Goſpel. Indeed the inordinate Purſuit of Vain-Glory, and the valuing the Eſteem or Favour of any Men above the diſcharge of a good Conſcience, is ſo oppoſite to true Religion, to a lively Senſe of God, and Faith in him, that in this reſpect our Saviour ſaid, *How can ye believe, which receive Honour one of another?*

4. Their Righteouſneſs ſuperſtitiouſly laid a great ſtreſs on little outſide Things, and ſuch as were no parts of real Religion. They were ſtrict in waſhing thoſe hands which remained polluted by evil Works, and in waſhing Pots and Tables, as if theſe and ſuch other Things were of doctrinal neceſſity. They were careful to tithe Mint and Aniſe, and appeared hugely ſcrupulous about the Obligation of their unlawful Vow of *Corban*, but with reſpect to that Vow could without regret diſpenſe with the neglect of honouring ſuperior Relations, againſt the fifth Commandment. They received the Traditions of their Scribes with a great and inor-

inordinate Veneration, even above the Law it ſelf; and of theſe unwritten Traditions they had a great Number, as the Scripture intimateth, and *Joſephus* expreſly teſtifieth. Ant. l. 13. c. 18. And out of a pretext of Purity they rejected all Converſe with Publicans, tho ſuch as were juſtified rather than themſelves.

But true Chriſtian Righteouſneſs muſt conſiſt in minding and chiefly valuing the great Duties of true Piety and Holineſs. And by our Saviour's Doctrine, a Wo is denounced againſt the Phariſees little Strictneſſes, while they neglected the weighty things of the Law. And their obſerving and urging thoſe things as greatly neceſſary, which indeed were not truly good, were ſo far from pleaſing God, that our Lord declared, *That in vain they worſhipped him, teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men*; therein applying to them thoſe Words of the Prophet *Eſay*, according to the Verſion of the Septuagint. Mat. 15. 9. Iſa. 29 13.

5. They were haughty and imperious, but not ſubmiſſive to Rulers and Governours. They were forward to bind heavy Burdens on the Shoulders of others, but were not themſelves willing to ſtoop to the Duties of Obedience and Subjection. They were ſo little Friends to *Cæſar*, that by them the Queſtion was propounded, *Whether it was lawful to give Tribute to* Cæſar, *or no?* and were ſo averſe to Authority, that as *Joſephus* relates, they did πολεμεῖν τε καὶ βλάπτειν, make War, and otherwiſe were injurious towards, and ſpake evil of their Governours. And they were frequently turbulent and tumultuous. Mat. 22. 15, 17.

But by the Evangelical Doctrine, only the Humble and Lowly can enter into Heaven. The Son of God himſelf ſo far promoted Submiſſion to all in Authority, that he was obedient to his Parents, was himſelf baptized of *John*. And the New Teſtament earneſtly enjoins upon us Obedience to them who have the Rule over us, and denounceth Damnation to thoſe who reſiſt the higher Powers.

6. And laſtly; They left themſelves and their Followers at a licentious Liberty in many weighty Matters of Doctrine and

and Practice. They could ſuffer their Hands to be Polluted by devouring Widows Houſes, and their Tables by Extortion and Exceſs. They made void the Commands of God by their Traditions, and were ſuch Caſuiſts, as to allow Swearing by Heaven and Earth, and to account ſuch Oaths, as thoſe by the Temple and the Altar, to leave no Obligation; when Swearing by the Gold of the Temple, or the Gift upon the Altar, did oblige. And it is manifeſt from this fifth chapter of St. *Matthew*, that according to their ſtricteſt Rules, they gave allowance to inward Wrath, and Hatred, and Luſt, if it did not break forth in open Murther, or Adultery, as was noted by *Tertullian*, who alſo obſerveth how ſtrictly extenſive our Saviour's Doctrine is, even againſt the unchaſt Eye and inward Wrath, or in the phraſe of St. *John*, *That he that hateth his Brother is a Murtherer.*

Tert. de Idolat. c. 2.

But the excellent Chriſtian Rules of Life, which command the inward Man, and far out-do the looſe Principles of the *Phariſees*, are many of them propoſed by the Bleſſed Jeſus in this and the following Chapters, and are included under that Sanction at the cloſe of this Sermon on the Mount, *that he that hears theſe words of his, and doth them not, is likened to him who builds his Houſe on the Sand, which ends in a dreadful fall.* And Vertuous Practices are ſo far from pleading any allowance from Chriſtianity, that, *Whoſoever breaks the leaſt Commandment, and teacheth Men ſo, ſhall be called leaſt*, or not be accounted of, *in the Kingdom of Heaven.*

Theſe things I have diſcourſed of, are ſufficient to ſhew the groſs miſcarriages of the *Phariſaical* Righteouſneſs, in oppoſing the neceſſary Duties of Unity, Meekneſs, Sincerity, true Religious Piety, Obedience, and Univerſal Holineſs; and therefore this could be no ſafe way to the Kingdom of Heaven.

I now come to the ſecond Enquiry; How ſtands the caſe of thoſe Societies, who lay the chief claims to Chriſtianity, as to their exceeding, or not exceeding the Righteouſneſs of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, in theſe particulars?

And here I ſhall not ranſack the remote and diſtant parts of the World, but take notice only of thoſe with which we are concerned; as, the Church of *England*, the preſent *Roman* Church, and the Diſſenting Parties among us. Nor ſhall I ſtrain reſemblances to make the Caſes appear Parallel, but ſhall take notice of things as they really are, to obſerve how far there is a likeneſs to, or compliance with the Spirit of *Phariſaiſm*. And here I profeſs, that I ſeriouſly wiſh well to all Men of what Party ſoever; and therefore whatever I ſhall ſay that ſpeaks the error or danger of any of them, is not out of deſign to caſt reproach upon them, but out of this true Charitable End, to warn others to take heed thereof; and I ſhould be glad if it might make any of them conſider of the error of their way.

1. Concerning Separation and Diviſion. This was eſteemed by the ancient Church as an heinous Crime. St. *Chryſoſtom* equals it with Hereſy, and St. *Cyprian* makes it a greater offence than that of the *Lapſi*.

Chr. in Eph.
Cyp. de Unit. Eccl.

The Church of *England* is clear herein; it owns and profeſſeth the Catholick and Apoſtolick Faith and Doctrine, and none other, and appoints a way of Worſhip agreeable thereto, and ſo gives no cauſe to warrant any Separation from her. Our Caſe with reſpect to the *Romiſh* Church, is in part like that of the Apoſtles, with regard to the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, whileſt they profeſſed the true Chriſtian Doctrine, and worſhipped God after the way which was unjuſtly called Hereſy; the *Phariſees* ſentenced ſuch to be put out of the Synagogue: And the *Talmud* of the *Venice* Edition hath been obſerved to affirm, That *Jeſus* himſelf was Excommunicated with the *Shammatha*, or great Excommunication: And becauſe we (as we ought) reject the evil and corrupt *Romiſh* Doctrines and Practices, they cenſure us as Hereticks, and let fly their *Anathema's* in various Canons of *Trent*, and yearly denounce their Excommunications in the Bull in *Cœna Domini*. And beſides this, we cannot join in the main part of the *Romiſh* Worſhip, without

Joh. 12. 42.

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embracing their Superſtitious and Idolatrous Practices: Nor have they any Right of Juriſdiction over us. And all this acquits us from the Crime of Schiſm in our Reformation.

But they at *Rome*, though they keep to their publick Worſhip as the *Phariſees* did, are yet groſsly guilty of Schiſm, by unjuſtly rejecting all other Chriſtian Churches, who make uſe of their own juſt Rights; and are not more ready to ſubmit to St. *Peters* pretended Succeſſor, and his Impoſtures, than to the Precepts and Doctrines of his and our Lord and Maſter. And herein they paſs Sentence, as the *Phariſee* did againſt the *Publican*, upon them who are better than themſelves.

Other Parties at home, practiſe Diviſions in an higher degree than the *Phariſees* did, openly ſeparating themſelves from the publick Aſſemblies of our Chriſtian Worſhip.

2. Concerning fierceneſs and furiouſneſs of Zeal. Our Church entertains no Bloody nor Uncharitable Doctrines or Tenents; its Rules concerning Government, contain as much mildneſs as can conſiſt with Peace and Order; and its Practice rather more, by reaſon of the diſtemper and diſorder of the minds of Men.

But ſuch is the *Romiſh* fierceneſs, that in the higheſt violation of Charity, they exclude other Churches from Salvation. And their furious Zeal appears by Fire and Faggot, by bloody Inquiſitions, Maſſacres, and Rebellions; by Horrid Treaſons and cruel Conſpiracies; of which the World hath had, and we have abundant Evidence. Theſe things are ſo unlike Chriſtianity, and Jeſus the Saviour, that they betray themſelves to be from the *Abaddon* and Ἀπολλύων. When *Eſpencæus*, a learned Doctor of *Paris*, had obſerved how the ancient Canons obliged all the Clergy againſt engaging in War and Blood; he acknowledgeth, and ſmartly taxeth the contrary practice of the late *Romiſh* Church and her Biſhops, as herein degenerating from the Spirit of Chriſtianity, *veteris Gentiliſmi ritu*, with a greater ſuitableneſs to the temper of *Pagans*.

Eſp. in 1. Tim. Digr. l. 2. c. 6.

And in other Diſſenting Parties, it is too manifeſt how prone their forward and leading Men are to cenſorious Uncharitableneſs, and raſh Judging; and how ready they have been, unjuſtly to take up the Sword, and purſue the Intereſt of their Party with War and Blood; with ſuch circumſtances as I forbear to mention.

And the conſideration of this temper may give us ſome account of the great eagerneſs, and reſtleſs earneſtneſs of theſe erring Parties, in propagating their particular Intereſts.

3. Concerning the aiming to gain the applauſe and favour of Men in the neglect of Duty. Our Church, in its Rules of Doctrine, lays the ſame ſtreſs upon all Duties to God or Man, that the Goſpel of our Saviour doth; without yielding to the Humours of the Profane, the Debauched, or the Turbulent and Unruly.

The *Romaniſts* ſuit themſelves to all Diſpoſitions; they have ſevere Rules in ſome of their Regular Societies, for the more Serious; but they take great care to gratify Wicked and Debauched Perſons alſo, with as much Liberty as they can well deſire. Their Caſuiſts generally declare, That an act of Attrition, or ſuch Sorrow for Sin as is not accompanied with hatred againſt it, or the true Love of God, is at laſt ſufficient, with Abſolution, to remove the guilt of Sin, and ſecure them from Eternal Death. But if temporal Puniſhment remains for them, this can only bring them to Purgatory; and here they may have conſiderable help from Indulgences, and the Treaſury of the Church, which are diſpenſed for *Ave-Maries* and other Prayers, viſiting certain places, having Maſſes ſaid for their Souls, and by other works, without their becoming really holy and good. And beſides this, their feigned Miracles and Revelations, their pretended power of Tranſubſtantiating, of diſpenſing the Treaſury of Merits in the Church, and of juſtifying them who are not contrite, by Abſolution, ſeem methods contrived to gain admiration from the People.

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And other Sects make their Intereſts, and ſeek Reputation by popular Arts; and often by promoting or conniving at Uncharitableneſs, Mens high Conceits of themſelves, and a Temper averſe from Unity and Obedience; which are things of a very evil Nature: And ſome of their chief Teachers acknowledg, that in ſome things they act againſt their own Judgments in compliance with their People.

4. Concerning Superſtitious urging thoſe things as parts of Religion which are not ſuch. Our Church owneth no neceſſary Article of Faith, but what is in our Creed, nor any Doctrines of Chriſtianity, but what are deducible from the Holy Scriptures. Our Conſtitutions for Decency, and Rules of Order are eſtabliſhed only as ſuch; and are withal innocent, uſeful, few, and agreeing to Primitive Chriſtianity.

But at *Rome*, a great part of their Religion, as they make it, conſiſts in acknowledging many things to be *de Fide*; which are neither contained in the Scriptures, agreeing with them, nor acknowledged in the ancient Church; in entertaining various falſe Doctrines and pretended Traditions with equal reverence to the Holy Scriptures; and in uſing divers Rites as operative of Divine Aid and Grace, which God never appointed to that end.

Our other dividing Parties are too nigh the *Phariſaical* Doctrine concerning the Obligation of their voluntary Vow againſt their Duty to Superiours. And many of them lay a Doctrinal Neceſſity, either upon diſowning Epiſcopal Authority, which hath ſo great a Teſtimony of Apoſtolical Appointment: Or, in being againſt Forms of Prayer, at leaſt ſuch, wherein the People vocally join; or, in condemning as ſinful, innocent Appointments, decent Ceremonies, and ſuitable Geſtures. And thoſe who own not theſe Poſitions, nor condemn our Worſhip as ſinful, and yet divide from us; muſt aſſert other Poſitions for Doctrines, which are equally erroneous and dangerous: For, if their Principles be agreeable to their Practice, they muſt aſſert, that Men may break the Churches Peace, and expoſe it to the greateſt ha-

hazards, gratify its Enemies, and diſobey Authority, which are great Sins, to maintain an oppoſition to thoſe things which themſelves dare not charge with any Sin. But this is to aver ſuch Doctrine to be from God, which is contrary to his Religion, his Nature and his Will, and are but the Precepts of Men; and it is to ſtrain at a Gnat, but ſwallow a Camel.

Now, if to counterfeit the Seal, or Coin, or falſely to pretend to the Authority of an Earthly Prince, be greatly culpable; can it be otherwiſe to ſtamp a Divine Impreſſion on things which God diſowns.

5. Concerning Obedience and Submiſſion to Superiors; this Duty is regularly enjoined in our Church, both with reſpect to Private Relations, Spiritual Guides, and Civil Rulers.

In the *Romiſh* Church there is ſtrict Obedience required in their ſeveral Orders, to the Superiors thereof; in the Laiety to the Clergy; and in all, to the Pope: But this is ſo irregular, that thereby the natural Honour to Parents is much diſcharged; and St. *Peter*'s Precept of *Honouring the King*, is, under the name of his Vicar, changed into ſuch Poſitions, as when occaſion ſerves, may encourage the Depoſing and Murdering him.

And among other Diſſenters, their Diviſions, as they are circumſtantiated, are *ipſo facto* ſuch viſible Teſtimonies of their want of Submiſſion to their Eccleſiaſtical and Civil Governours, that nothing need be added. And it is known there were ſome of theſe Parties, whoſe Principles allowed them to take Arms againſt their King; and who expoſed his Royal Perſon to Violence and Death.

6. Concerning a looſe and licentious Life. Our Church requires a Sincere, Holy Exerciſe, and preſſeth all the Precepts of our Saviour, and the Motives and Arguments of the Goſpel; and enjoineth the careful obſervation of our Baptiſmal Vow.

But in the *Romiſh* Church, he that conſiders the immoral looſeneſs of the Jeſuits and other Caſuiſts, may wonder that

that ſuch things ſhould be owned by Men of any Religion, much more of them who profeſs the Chriſtian Religion. For inſtance; By our Saviour's Doctrine, *to love God with all the heart*, is the great and firſt Commandment. But *Azorius* aſſerts, *That it is hard to fix any time, when this Precept of Loving God doth oblige to any exerciſe thereof, with reſpect to it ſelf, but only when it is neceſſary to Repentance.* And he roundly ſaith, *We are not obliged to any exerciſe of Love to God, when we attain to the uſe of Reaſon, nor at the receiving any Sacrament, not at Confeſſion, nor at the approach of Death.* *Filiucius* thinks this Opinion probable (and therefore ſafe by their Doctrine of Probability) but prefers another Opinion, which is but little better; *That we are bound to act Love to God at the time of Death, and in ſome other extraordinary caſes if they happen; and that ordinarily Men ought to exerciſe an act of Love to God, at leaſt once in five years.* But I am amazed to think how ſparing ſuch Men were of inward Religious Devotion, and what Strangers to it!

Azor. Tom. 1. l. 9. c. 4.

Filiuc. Tr. 22. c. 9.

And for the practice of Repentance, which is another great Duty of our Religion. Though Contrition, which includes an hating and forſaking Sin, and turning to God, be acknowledged of good uſe by them; yet *Filiucius* ſaith, *Men are not obliged to acts of Contrition every year, but once in five or ſeven years; and that if they die without them, they may be ſaved.* But *Layman* declares, *That the Precept and Duty of Repentance is ſatisfied by coming once in a year with Attrition to Confeſſion, and the Sacrament of Penance, and by doing the ſame at the time of Death.* But is not this a Religion ſet up to undermine the Holy Goſpel of our Saviour, and to intitle thoſe workers of Iniquity to Heaven, whom his Doctrine will condemn to Hell?

Fil. Tr. 6 c 8. n. 196, 197, and 208.

Laym. l. 5. Tr. 6. c. 2. n. 6.

And our other Parties give too much allowance to ſome particular miſcarriages which I have before mentioned. And many of them lay not that ſtreſs they ought, on a Holy Life in general (which is included under Converſion and Repentance) in that they do not account it a neceſſary condition or previous qualification for the obtaining the Favour of God,

God, and the Pardon of Sin, or, which is all one, for Justification.

Having now gone through these Heads of Discourse, I shall further here observe three things.

First, That the *Romanists* are not only thus far guilty of equal, but are chargeable with much greater miscarriages than those of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*. I might have run on the Parallel farther: as when the one devoured Widows Houses, under a pretence of long Prayers; the other carry on the like designs of Covetousness and Extortion, by their Indulgences and Masses for the Dead.

But the *Pharisees* were not so degenerate, as to offer their Prayers or Sacrifices to Saints, or even to Angels (though the Law was given by their Ministration,) but to such the *Romish* Church directs a great part of her Religious Worship. They gave not Divine Honour, either to the Temple, which was the place of God's Presence, or to any Sacrifice, as the Papists do to the Host. They worshipped not the Invisible God under the debasing representation of an Image, as the *Samaritans* did, and the *Romanists* do. And when God appointed a continual Burnt-Offering, with a Meat-Offering and Drink-Offering, they did not make so bold as to alter his Institutions, and withdraw one part thereof, as they at *Rome* have done concerning the distribution of the *Eucharistical* Cup. And when the *Pharisees* had only so much Pride, as vainly to account themselves righteous, and far better than others; they did not, as the *Romanists* do, pretend to such Supererogation, and so great a stock of Merits, as to be able thereby to supply the defects of others. But if they at *Rome* had what they pretend, it had need be a vast Treasury of good Works, to make amends for the notorious bad ones, which are the result of the Positions allowed and maintained in that Church. The *Pharisees* claimed a great Authority to be Masters of the Faith of others; but it doth not appear that they found-

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ed this in ſo high and unreaſonable a claim to Infallibility, as they at *Rome* do; the holding of which engageth them to continue in all their other Errors. Nor were they ſo deeply uncharitable, as utterly to exclude the *Eſſens*, and all other Sects from the favour of God, as the *Romaniſts* deal with all other Churches; nor did they debar the people from reading the Scriptures.

Secondly; I obſerve that other Dividing Parties, though they are very different among themſelves, and are not all to be alike eſteemed of; yet either all, or moſt of them, have ſome miſcarriages not received by the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*: for inſtance, the *Phariſees* did not ſlight or neglect the Sacraments of the Old Teſtament, either Circumciſion, or the Paſsover; as too many now do, one or both the Sacraments of the New. They never gave way that the Temple-Sacrifices, and other ſuch like Services of God, ſhould be performed by any other, but only thoſe Prieſts whom God had appointed for that purpoſe; when many in our days can admit and allow the performance of Chriſtian Miniſtrations by thoſe who have no Regular, Authoritative and Juſtifiable Ordination: And ſuch things, however ſome eſteem of them, are of the greater moment, becauſe they violate the peculiar Inſtitutions of our Lord, and the ordinary way that he hath appointed for the conveying and applying the Grace of the Goſpel, and the benefits of his Death and Paſſion.

Thirdly; I obſerve alſo, that it muſt be acknowledged there were other great Crimes of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, which are not chargeable on any of thoſe Parties, of whom I have diſcourſed: Such were their profeſſed diſowning our Saviour and his Doctrine, their actual contriving his Death, and their obſtinacy under thoſe various mighty Miracles which were frequently wrought before their Eyes. But as the former Tranſgreſſions which I mentioned, have been particularly proved deſtructive, ſo I think them to

be especially intended in this severe censure of our Saviour, of the insufficiency of their Righteousness. For these words were uttered soon after he began to teach; and before the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* had declared their greatest enmity to his Person, their obstinacy under his Miracles, or their contrivement of his Death; and therefore they must have respect to their Righteousness, according to that time when these words were spoken. And the scope of his Discourse shews him to condemn, as greatly defective, such Rules of Doctrine and Practice, as they then directed and proposed.

I now come in the third place, as my Conclusion, to note the result of these Enquiries in two particulars.

First; This should warn those of the *Romish*, and other opposite Perswasions, to consider seriously of their own Danger, and of what may conduce to their Safety. If they think themselves sufficiently secure, so did also the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, of whom our Saviour judged otherwise. And I could heartily wish, that all persons of their several Divisions were really free from all things sinful and dangerous.

I think my self obliged to express as much Charity to others, as can be consistent with Truth and a sober Judgment. And therefore I freely aeknowledge that the several Parties who divide from our Church, are not all equally chargeable with many things I have insisted on; and I verily hope, that in all these various divisions there may be several particular persons led aside by meer mistake and misapprehension, and whose uprightness of intention may be a preservative to them from much of that evil they might otherwise be engaged in. And though all Sin is every where prejudicial, I hope also that those miscarriages which such persons are brought into, by their undiscerned Errors, will not exclude them from the Mercy of God; and many of their Practices may be better than their Principles.

But

But whilſt any of us may expreſs our Charity towards them, and hope the beſt, it becomes them to have that care of themſelves, as to fear the worſt: For Charity doth not make the Condition of other Men ſafe unto whom it is extended, but this muſt be determined by the Judgment of God. Thoſe Perſons, whoſe Minds or Practices are really worſe than other Men hope them to be, are in never the better State for ſuch charitable Hopes. And whoſoever are engaged in any of thoſe Evils which were included in Phariſaiſm, and condemned in Chriſtianity, had need carefully to reflect on themſelves, and heartily and timely to amend.

But if any ſhould be offended at a Diſcourſe that repreſents to them the Danger of their Practices, and ſhould be more ready to cenſure it as uncharitable, than to weigh and conſider it; they may know, that as this ſpeaks a very bad Temper of Mind prevailing in them, ſo the letting Men alone in their ſinful Actions, is ſo far from being any part of that Charity which our Saviour practiſed or enjoined, that it is more agreeable with the Temper of the Evil One, who is willing that they who do amiſs ſhould continue in their Evil, be flattered therein, and not ſo conſider thereof as to forſake it.

Secondly; Let all who are of our Church, and whoever embrace the true Catholick Communion, be careful and ſerious in practiſing Holineſs and Righteouſneſs. Our Doctrine and Profeſſion condemneth and diſowneth all unſound Principles and corrupt Practices. And as the more devout Jews daily bleſſed God, that they were born *Jews*, and not of גוים the Gentiles; ſo have we great reaſon to praiſe God, that we live in this excellent Church, and are thereby free from various Snares, to which many others are expoſed.

But if amongſt us, Debauchery, Profaneneſs, or Irreligion, prevail upon any Perſons whomſoever, ſuch Wickedneſs of Life will exclude Perſons of the pureſt Profeſſion and Belief from ever entring into Heaven. St. *Auſtin* ſome-

Aug. de Civ. Dei, l. 20. c. 9. & de fid. & oper.

ſometimes warns againſt this, as a conſiderable Defect in the Phariſees Righteouſneſs, that while they ſate in *Moſes*'s Chair, our Lord tells us, *they ſay, but do not.* If ever we will be happy, our Practice muſt anſwer our Profeſſion; the Doctrine of Chriſtianity is a Doctrine according to Godlineſs, and muſt be improved to that End. An Heretical or Schiſmatical Life, as ſome ancient Writers call that vicious Converſation which ſeparates the Man from the Ways of God and Religion, is the more unaccountable and inexcuſable, when it contradicteth and croſſeth the moſt Catholick Profeſſion, and the beſt Rules of Duty clearly propoſed. Wherefore let us be careful, that as the Righteouſneſs required in the Doctrine of our Church, in conformity to the Goſpel of our Saviour, doth greatly exceed that of the Scribes and Phariſees; ſo may that of our Lives alſo, in conformity to that Doctrine: Which God of his Mercy grant, through the Merits of our holy and bleſſed Saviour, *To whom, &c.*

FINIS.

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